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ABSTRACT

The report discusses exemplary practices in coordinating special education and vocational rehabilitation services. Project sites were nominated and visited and staff interviewed. The first of two sections in the report compares program elements (planning, administration/structure, staff development training and dissemination efforts, vocational assessment and Individualized Education Programs/Individual Written Rehabilitation Plan development, and programing), and cites trends in collaborative programs between vocational rehabilitation, special education, and vocational education. Section 2 contains field study reports on each of nine projects visited. Detailed descriptions are presented of model approaches to collaboration. Concluding the report is a chart showing significant characteristics of field study programs. (CL)

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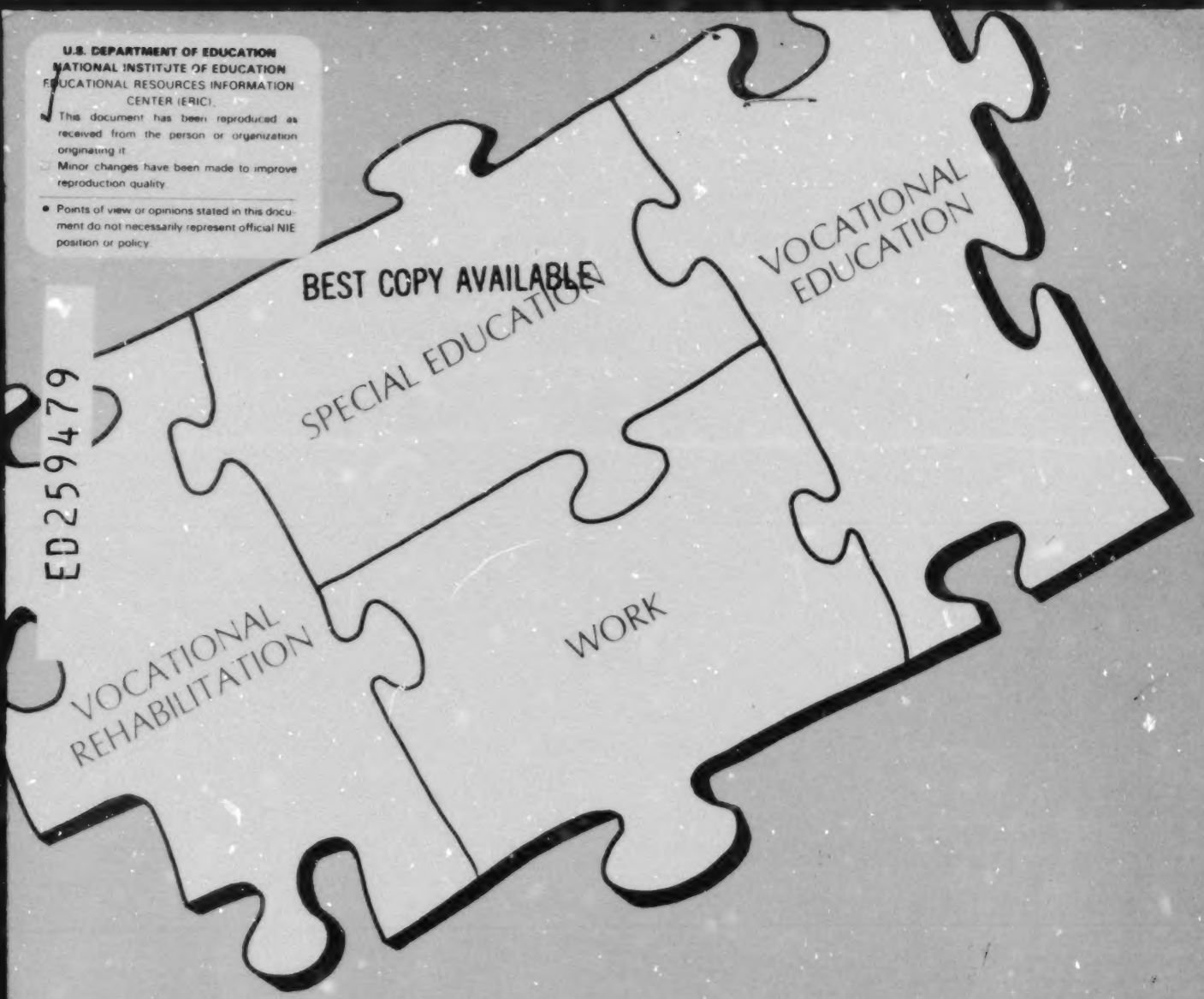

COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS FOR TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
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COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS FOR TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK

August, 1985

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Report on Cooperative Programs for Transition from School to Work

Prepared under Contract No. 300-83-0158
"Models of Exemplary Practices in Coordinating Special Education and Vocational Rehabilitation Services"

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CHART: Significant Characteristics of Field Study Programs

Introduction

A. The Context of the Study

Providing a coordinated continuum of service to aid disabled youth in moving from school into competitive employment can only be accomplished through interagency collaboration. The reasons for this are well documented. Vocational services, like other services for disabled persons, are fragmented and duplicative. Professionals working with handicapped youth must look to other agencies if they wish to meet the full range of client needs.

Interagency cooperation to deliver services to secondary age students encourages the development of new strategies. It also establishes mechanisms for on-going support after graduation. For youth leaving the school system without jobs, coordination is critical to ensure that they do not fall between the cracks of the service delivery system.

Recent reductions in federal and state budgets for programs for the disabled have also increased the need for interagency coordination to ensure that services continue. Professionals must increase their funding base for services while making service delivery more efficient. This requires coordination with other agencies and with the private sector.

Statutory developments have also given impetus to the interagency movement. Interest in coordinating the delivery of vocational services has been stimulated by the language and intent of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, P.L. 94-142, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, P.L. 93-112, and the Vocational Education Act, P.L. 94-482. In keeping with these legislative enactments, in November, 1978, the Commissioners of Education and Rehabilitation Services issued a joint memorandum encouraging development of interagency agreements between special education, vocational rehabilitation, and vocational education to increase provision of coordinated services.

Despite the growing interest in interagency provision of vocational services, there has been a dearth of information on actual cooperative programs. Most of the literature to date has focused on the preparation and content of interagency agreements. Thus, there has been a need for information on how cooperative programs are structured, how they operate, and what services they provide. Collection of this type of information was deemed essential in order to provide guidance to others who might wish to establish similar programs. For this reason the National Institute of Handicapped Research, U.S. Department of Education, contracted with Harold Russell Associates to conduct a study of

exemplary practices in coordinating special education and vocational rehabilitation services.

B. The Study Methods

The study of exemplary practices in coordinating special education and vocational rehabilitation services consists of two phases -- a data collection phase and a training phase. The data collection phase, which is now complete, included a literature review, development of criteria for exemplary programs, and a nine-state field study. The training phase will involve development of training materials providing information on how to replicate significant program elements. A project advisory committee, including representatives of the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) and the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) provides guidance to the project staff.

The criteria for selection of field study programs were developed on the basis of the literature review, discussions with persons involved in operating cooperative programs and other experts in the field, and the input of the advisory committee. Criteria were developed in the following categories: planning, administration/structure, staff training and development, vocational assessment and IEP/IWRP development, and programming. (Because vocational education is a critical component in vocational preparation of handicapped youth, the criteria included issues and concerns pertinent to program coordination involving vocational education.)

Program nominations for the field study were supplied jointly by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Regional Offices and by the project staff after extensive field contacts. Nine programs, including both state-wide and locally-based programs were selected for the field study. They included:

- The Cooperative School Program, Torrance, California
- The Cooperative School/Rehabilitation Work-Study Program, State of Oklahoma
- The Interagency Service Delivery System for Vocational Education and Related Services for the Handicapped, State of Michigan
- North Dakota Interagency Cooperative Agreement/Fargo, Region 5, State of North Dakota
- Project Work Ability, State of California
- Richland County School District 2, VR Public School Cooperative Program, Richland County, South Carolina

- St. Joseph School District, St. Joseph, Missouri
- The Secondary Work Experience Program and Vocational Adjustment Counselors Program, State of Illinois
- VORSE II Project, Utica, New York

The field visits to the nine selected sites occurred during December, 1983, and January, 1984.

During the field visits, the project staff conducted interviews related to the criteria for exemplary programs. For state-wide programs, staff interviewed state-level agency directors and their staff, especially those whose responsibilities included monitoring or coordinating the state-wide cooperative program. At local sites HRA staff interviewed program directors, superintendents and/or principals of local school districts, directors of special and vocational education, special and vocational education teachers, local vocational rehabilitation personnel, parents and students. Documents reviewed included: project descriptions/informational materials, annual reports, budget information, state and/or local interagency agreements, evaluation materials and reports, training materials, project forms and sanitized IWRP's and IEP's. The information gathered in the field has been analyzed and summarized and forms the basis for this report*.

The Format of the Report

The Report on Exemplary Programs is organized into two sections. Section I is an analysis of the field study programs. This section compares various program elements and contains a general discussion of findings and trends. Section II contains the field study reports on each program visited. This section contains detailed descriptions of model approaches to coordination between special education, vocational rehabilitation and vocational education. Points of interest noted in Section I are described in detail in Section II.

*Information on other interagency programs familiar to the project staff has also been included, where appropriate.

SECTION I

A. Planning

1. Rationales for Interagency Cooperation

There are many factors underlying an agency's decision to collaborate with other agencies. However, it is important for successful planning that assisting disabled students achieve the maximum independence and self-reliance possible be accepted as the central goal of a cooperative program. In order to achieve this goal agencies collaborate to improve their services. VR involvement is often prompted by the realization that many youth (who have often dropped out of school) are being picked up too late for VR to impact vocational skill development leading to job placement. On the other hand, many schools realize that coordination between special education, vocational education, and vocational rehabilitation is critical for increasing the vocational options available for handicapped students. Too many disabled youth leave the school system with no marketable job skills. Also, coordination with VR helps ensure a continuation of services for disabled students.

2. Approaches to Interagency Cooperation

There is no single model of successful coordination between vocational rehabilitation, special education and vocational education. When considering planning for different coordination practices, it is important to realize that it is impossible to completely transplant a model and expect it to work for every situation . Programs demonstrating practices in interagency coordination generally fall into three different planning categories : a) state level cooperative agreements followed by state-wide training, local agreements and the development of local cooperative programs; b) state-initiated pilot projects leading to program expansion, local agreements and sometimes state level agreements; and c) the development of cooperative programs through local initiative. Evidence does not suggest that one planning strategy is more successful than another method. Successful coordination depends upon the community/state situation or setting and the commitment to the cooperative effort.

a. State Agreement and State-Wide Training

North Dakota, Michigan, Maine and Vermont are examples of states which first developed state-level interagency agreements to formalize relationships between vocational rehabilitation, special education and vocational education. The state-level agreement was then disseminated through state-wide interagency training efforts which provided the impetus for the development of local agreements and local cooperative programs.

Successful planning for such a state-wide effort is usually accomplished by the assignment of a person(s) or an interagency

committee whose responsibility is to ensure state support for the local cooperative programs. In Maine and Vermont, the responsibility for statewide planning, staff training and coordination was assigned to an independent university consultant. A similar approach was employed in North Dakota. The use of an independent facilitator to organize and support cooperative efforts can help resolve deadlocks which sometimes occur between agencies with differing mandates and service areas.

North Dakota also assigned an Interagency Steering Committee to oversee the state-level agreement and support the local-level agreements and programs. Local advisory committees were fashioned after the state Steering Committee. The use of a committee to ensure follow-up and ongoing support encourages continual interagency involvement in the cooperative effort. Michigan planned somewhat differently in that a staff person from each of the three agencies was assigned to monitor and support the local program as part of a state coordinated system. This ensured equal participation of each agency.

The existence of written agreements does not guarantee actual program operation. Even with state-level support and encouragement, the success of the local programs depends upon the commitment of the local agencies' administrators and line staff to the concept of interagency cooperation. However, location in a state with a strong state-level commitment to interagency collaboration can make the process of starting and maintaining a cooperative program easier for local agencies.

b. Pilot Projects and Program Expansion

Several successful state cooperative programs have resulted from the operation of a small pilot project to test an idea and then gradual expansion of program operation into additional school districts. Local-level agreements are then developed and this sometimes also leads to the development of a state-level agreement.

After operating a pilot program, Illinois and South Carolina state VR agencies became primarily responsible for contracting with the local school districts to operate similar cooperative programs. In Illinois, all interagency agreements are between the state vocational rehabilitation agency and the local school district or special education district. At the state level, special education supports the program by allowing the school districts to use state/federal funds for the cooperative efforts. However, there is no formal state-level agreement.

The Oklahoma and California interagency practices provide excellent examples of states that started small with one pilot program, expanded and then developed a state-level interagency agreement. For example, in 1961 a work/study program was started in one Oklahoma high school with the aid of federal monies. The program concept spread and the formal agreements were developed between the state vocational rehabilitation agency, the special

education section of the state education agency and the local school districts. A state-level agreement was then developed to formalize the concept and to delineate specific responsibilities for the agencies. In California, after a successful program pilot, 94-142 discretionary monies were used to foster vocational programming in 34 local school districts. A state-level interagency agreement was developed as a composite of the local cooperative arrangements.

c. Local Initiative

The need to improve services for students with disabilities has long been identified by concerned professionals. Therefore, in many local areas the process of coordinating services between vocational rehabilitation and education agencies became a natural response to the perceived need. As with state-initiated programs, local initiatives occur primarily because two or three individuals advocate for a program and then complete the necessary tasks to ensure that it materializes.

In Utica, New York a VR counselor was assigned to work with graduating seniors to aid in a smooth transition into VR services. This counselor soon discovered that many of the disabled students were dropping out of high school and then eventually coming to VR through other routes. By the time these individuals became VR clients they had a history of failure that made working with them difficult. In order to address the problem in a systematic way, a proposal was developed in conjunction with school personnel. After two attempts, the proposal was funded to establish a VR Youth Services Unit to work with school systems and provide services earlier than senior year. Instead of an interagency agreement, the proposal provided the guidelines and mechanisms for program operation. Written summaries of interagency meetings to modify or expand upon the operations outlined in the proposal were used to clarify agency responsibilities.

The Torrance, California local program was developed as a result of a previous VR cooperative program. When the funding for the cooperative program was threatened, school district and local VR agency personnel decided that coordination between the two agencies was too valuable to end. A request was made to the school board for support to continue a programmatic relationship. The present Cooperative School Program is now well established in the school district.

3. Common Planning Elements

The organizational structure and the various activities of interagency programs differ according to size and location. The discussion of the various collaborative efforts according to planning categories points out several common planning elements which contribute to effective and lasting collaborative efforts. The following briefly analyzes these elements.

a. The primary philosophical stance which provides the stimulus for interagency coordination as well as shaping service offerings reflects the concept that career education is essential for special needs students in order to aid in their transition from school to work. Combining vocational and academic programming with the optional provision of work experience for students with disabilities represents a shift in policy for many high schools which have traditionally held that students with disabilities must reach a certain level of academic competence before vocational and/or career considerations can be addressed. How the conflict between the two approaches is perceived and defined within the school district will guide the development of interagency efforts.

b. Cooperative programs which attempt to provide comprehensive services generally resort to written guidelines in order to resolve conflicts resulting from differing mandates and differing interpretations of federal and/or state laws. Some type of written statement delineating roles and responsibilities, the sharing of resources and facilities, and the expenditure of dollars appears to be beneficial in maintaining an interagency program. Coordination between two or three different agency professionals can occur and be effective without anything in writing. However, the evolution of these close working relationships into a comprehensive systematized program usually requires written clarification. Most of the programs studied used some form of document to clarify roles and responsibilities between the cooperating agencies. They differed greatly, however, in the formality of the documents employed.

c. Collaboration cannot be forced. All contributing parties must view it as necessary in order to achieve successful program operation. If this does not occur, then conflicts and problems will erupt, demoralizing staff and seriously limiting program effectiveness. Requiring that all participating agencies contribute an equal share of the resources, whether it be funding, facilities, or staff time, will help instill a feeling of joint ownership and, hence, responsibility for the program.

d. The use of cross-agency inservice training can aid the development of interagency coordination. Inservice staff development training can foster communication and an understanding of different agencies' mandates and policies, and provide an awareness of each person's job responsibilities. For state-wide programs such as Michigan and North Dakota, staff training appears to be critical to the programs' success.

e. As mentioned previously, the assignment of a person(s) or an interagency committee to oversee the local programs and provide support is of significant importance to maintaining a state-wide cooperative program. Previous programs have collapsed due to factors which might have been minimized by a state-level interagency coordinator(s) or committee. The responsibilities of the state-level coordinator(s) or committee are to monitor the program in order to record successes and learn from mistakes, to

provide the impetus for continuation, to support new initiatives, to help resolve financial and programmatic problems, and in general to represent state-level commitment. When there is no such entity to advocate for the program, cooperative efforts may be eliminated from state budgets or die from lack of interest.

Individual local programs must also retain a person(s) to be responsible for monitoring and advocating for the program. For those local programs which do not rely on state-level support, the advocacy and monitoring responsibility generally resides in the program administrator and/or an interagency committee.

B. Administration/Structure

1. State Organizational Structure

One of the earliest questions raised in this study was the extent to which state organizational structure influences the success of cooperative efforts. In other words, is the ability to establish and maintain a cooperative program dependent upon vocational rehabilitation, special education, and vocational education being part of the same department or umbrella organization? The field study sites provided a variety of structures for consideration of this question. (See chart on State Agency Structure of Field Study Sites which follows.) The field study included three states in which vocational rehabilitation, special education, and vocational education are part of the same department, three states in which vocational rehabilitation is a separate department, and two states in which vocational rehabilitation, special education, and vocational education are all separate departments. Analysis of the programs established in these states indicated that state organizational structure for vocational rehabilitation, special education, and vocational education does not determine the success of cooperative efforts.

In Oklahoma, for example, vocational rehabilitation, special education, and vocational education are all part of separate departments (Human Services, Education, and Vocational-Technical Education), yet a cooperative program has been maintained for over twenty years. The effort in Oklahoma has been influenced more by the fact that administrators within each department have a strong commitment to the program than by agency structure. In fact, administrators within vocational rehabilitation and special education formerly served as teacher coordinators in the early days of the Oklahoma program.

In North Dakota, as in Oklahoma, vocational rehabilitation, special education, and vocational education are part of separate departments (Human Services, Public Instruction, Vocational Education.) Yet, North Dakota successfully conducted a statewide interagency initiative which included the development of comprehensive interagency agreements at both the state and local level. In North Dakota, the effort was eased by the state's small population and the fact that program administrators often know each other personally even though serving in different agencies. Their personal relationships and desire to cooperate fostered the flexibility which underlies the program's success.

In Illinois and South Carolina, vocational rehabilitation is a separate department from special education and vocational education. Yet, in both of these states, vocational rehabilitation serves as the lead agency in cooperative programming. Vocational rehabilitation identified the need for interagency cooperation, made the initial overtures to education, and worked with them to develop extensive third-party programs.

STATE AGENCY STRUCTURE of FIELD STUDY SITES

STRUCTURE	STATE	AGENCIES INVOLVED in COOPERATIVE PROGRAMMING
Vocational Education, Special Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation are Divisions of same Department	Michigan	Michigan Department of Education Vocational-Technical Education Service Special Education Services Area Michigan Rehabilitation Services
	Missouri	Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Division of Vocational Education Division of Special Education Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
	New York	New York State Education Department Office of Occupational and Continuing Education Office for Education of Children with Handicapping Conditions Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
Vocational Education and Special Education are Divisions of same Department (or Departments under same State Board) Vocational Rehabilitation is separate Department	California	California State Department of Education Division of Vocational and Continuing Education Division of Special Needs California State Department of Rehabilitation
	Illinois	Illinois State Board of Education Department of Adult, Vocational and Continuing Education Department of Specialized Educational Services Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services
	South Carolina	South Carolina Department of Education Office of Vocational Education Office of Programs for the Handicapped South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department
Vocational Education, Special Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation are all separate Departments	North Dakota	North Dakota State Board of Vocational Education North Dakota Department of Public Instruction Division of Special Education North Dakota Department of Human Services Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
	Oklahoma	Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and and Technical Education Oklahoma State Department of Education Special Education Section Oklahoma Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitative and Visual Services.

In Michigan and Missouri, vocational rehabilitation, special education, and vocational education are all part of the state education department. Yet the development of cooperative programming was quite different in each state. In Michigan, an extensive three-way interagency agreement was developed and a massive state-wide in-service training effort was undertaken to foster development of local agreements. In Missouri, there is no state-level interagency agreement and the interagency effort has focused on development of cooperative agreements between vocational rehabilitation and local school districts. This effort has been gradual and, in many instances, informal.

State agency structure is even less influential in the local programs visited. In California, for example, vocational rehabilitation is a separate department from education. Yet, in the Torrance Program, vocational rehabilitation and education operate the program as equal partners. In New York, on the other hand, vocational rehabilitation is part of the education department. Yet, in Utica, vocational rehabilitation takes the lead in maintaining cooperative programming.

It thus appears that interagency programming can flourish, regardless of the type of state agency structure found. The key is development of an approach which is tailored to a state's (or a locality's) own particular context. No one model of cooperating is appropriate in all circumstances and organizational structure is only one factor to consider in developing a model. If, however, there is a strong desire to cooperate, a commitment at high administrative levels, and a willingness to be flexible, the effort will succeed, regardless of state agency structure.

2. Responsibility for Coordination of Interagency Efforts

While the site visit programs varied in their structure, they were uniform in their recognition of the need for an entity or individual to coordinate interagency efforts. In all of the programs visited, the individuals involved cited the importance of a coordinator in maintaining the effort. The coordinator keeps channels of communication open, initiates meetings and other events, provides technical assistance, takes responsibility for paperwork, and works on any problems which may arise. If this role is not filled, participants in the cooperative effort tend to get caught up in their own agency concerns and the cooperative effort falters.

There are many different approaches to providing coordination for an interagency effort. Some states have designated an individual, some states have appointed a committee, and some states have done both. In North Dakota, for example, the directors of vocational rehabilitation, special education, and vocational education each appoint a representative to a state-level interagency steering committee. Chairmanship of the committee is rotated yearly. North Dakota has also established local committees which are modeled after the state-level committee.

Illinois, Oklahoma, and Michigan make use of individual coordinators and state-level committees to maintain their interagency efforts. The Illinois coordinator is a Program Administrator within the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS). She is assisted by a planning committee composed of representatives from each DORS region and from the Illinois Administrators of Special Education. The Oklahoma Coordinator is also a member of the vocational rehabilitation staff. Her title is Supervisor of Third Party Programs and she is responsible for state-level monitoring and evaluation of the cooperative program. Oklahoma also has an interagency vocational planning group composed of a representative from each of the three cooperating agencies. Michigan employs a Special Needs/Interagency Coordinator and has also appointed a representative from each of the three cooperating agencies to oversee the cooperative effort.

California's Project Work Ability is coordinated by a Project Director within the state education department. The slot was originally within special education and was later transferred to vocational education. Each of Project Work Ability's local programs also has a Site Manager who is responsible for local coordination. The Project Director maintains regular contact with the Site Managers and representatives of other agencies involved in the cooperative effort. She also convenes periodic state-wide conferences for all participants.

In South Carolina the interagency program is coordinated by the Supervisor, Division of Facilities and School Programs within vocational rehabilitation. In Utica, New York, the vocational rehabilitation office has an entire Youth Services Unit which focuses on interagency programming. The Unit Supervisor is responsible for overall coordination of the cooperative effort in Utica. In Torrance, California, the cooperative program is administered by the Coordinator of Career Education (vocational education director) and a vocational rehabilitation Program Supervisor.

The two California programs, Project Work Ability and Torrance, are noteworthy for their involvement of vocational education in individual coordination roles. As a result of this orientation, both programs enjoy particularly strong involvement of vocational education in cooperative efforts.

3. Use of Interagency Agreements

All of the field study programs varied in the extent to which they used written guidelines or agreements to govern their operations. There were also a variety of opinions as to the necessity of developing a state-level interagency agreement prior to establishing any cooperative programs.

Michigan and North Dakota are two sites in which cooperative efforts initially focused on development of a state-level interagency agreement. In Michigan representatives of vocational rehabilitation, special education, and vocational education

worked together to develop a comprehensive interagency agreement which delineates the responsibilities of each of the three agencies at both the state and local level. The agency representatives then worked together with a state-wide project training coordinator to prepare a training program for implementation of the agreement. One objective of the training program was the development of local agreements to guide local cooperative efforts. Michigan continues to refine its interagency agreement through working papers such as an annual statement of goals and objectives.

North Dakota also made use of an interagency planning group to develop its state-level interagency agreement. This group adopted the philosophy that the state-level agreement should be primarily a statement of understanding and that working agreements should be developed at the local level. The state-level agreement included a statement of mutual commitment to the provision of coordinated services, a general description of the roles and functions of state agencies and the services each might provide, and an implementation plan. As in Michigan, a state-wide training program was undertaken and regions were asked to form committees and develop local agreements. The local agreements which resulted cover such areas as find activities, obtaining consent for referral, assessment, individualized program planning, and program services. In the local program visited (Fargo) the local interagency agreement was used as a working manual by program staff.

In Oklahoma and California state-level interagency agreements resulted from the operation of cooperative programs, rather than preceding the programs. Oklahoma's cooperative program began in 1961 but its operation was guided primarily by a series of contracts between the state vocational rehabilitation agency and local school districts. It was not until 1978 that a state-level agreement was developed. The experience of running the program revealed a need to clarify roles and responsibilities in certain areas. An agreement was developed between vocational rehabilitation, special education, and vocational education. It contains an identification of resources to be used in providing various program services and serves as a set of guidelines for high school principals. It also covers such areas as provision of career awareness activities, composition of the IEP planning team, and development of collaborative IEP's and IWRP's.

California's Project Work Ability began as a pilot project in 1981. Although no state-level cooperative agreement was in place at the time, the state education department was working in conjunction with the Employment Development Department (EDD) (state employment security agency) and vocational rehabilitation to develop and expand the program. In 1982, thirty-four programs were funded by the mechanism of submission of grant proposals to the state education department. After the programs were operational an interagency agreement was developed between the state education department, EDD, and vocational rehabilitation. It was developed as a composite of the site proposals and

documented roles and responsibilities for the state agencies and for local education agencies. Although primary funding for the program came from 94-142 discretionary funds, the agreement also provided a vehicle for contribution of funding and in-kind resources by EDD and vocational rehabilitation. The collaboration fostered by the 1982 agreement has recently been formally renewed in a March, 1984, Memorandum of Understanding between education, rehabilitation, and EDD. The Memorandum delineates each agency's area of responsibility for Project Work Ability and establishes a system for liaison activities, coordination of resources, and general cooperation. Project Work Ability continues to use the mechanism of funding grant proposals which gives local site managers flexibility in combining Work Ability funding with other available resources.

South Carolina has had a state-level agreement between vocational rehabilitation and the state education department (which includes special education and vocational education) since 1967. The operation of South Carolina's program is, however, guided primarily by local agreements between vocational rehabilitation and school districts. The agreements cover such areas as placement of rehabilitation counselors in schools, establishment of school workshops, and provision of vocational rehabilitation services. Although they do not have state-level interagency agreements, Missouri and Illinois operate in a similar fashion to South Carolina. The Missouri vocational rehabilitation agency enters into agreements with local school districts. The arrangement may be formal or informal. Agreements cover such areas as assignment of vocational rehabilitation counselors to the schools, eligibility determination, IEP participation; and cooperation on job development and placement. Illinois' system, while similar, is more formal than that of Missouri. Vocational rehabilitation enters detailed contractual agreements with local vendors (school districts, regional programs, joint agreement districts, etc.) to establish a Secondary Work Experience Program and, in some instances, a Vocational Adjustment Counselor Program. A typical agreement covers such areas as administration of school programs, coordination of school programs with rehabilitation services, assignment of rehabilitation personnel, determination of eligibility and provision of rehabilitation services, IEP/IWRP coordination, and provision of administrative-technical, and consultative services by vocational rehabilitation. Agreements are tailored to meet the special circumstances of each program and other duties and functions may be assigned as appropriate. Vocational rehabilitation has also established a detailed system for administration and monitoring of agreements. The system includes instructional manuals which are provided to all vendors to assist them in applying for funds and to guide them in program implementation.

The local programs visited, Torrance, California and Utica, New York, both operate without formal written agreements. In both programs this approach was deliberately adopted to allow for flexibility in program operation. In Torrance, in fact, the program initially made use of a very detailed contract to spell

out the obligations on each side. The parties found this approach to be too restrictive and moved to a memorandum of understanding. Eventually, as the program became more and more established, the parties found that they were able to operate without any formal written agreements. This does not imply a lack of written guidelines, however. Torrance has written information on such areas as vocational rehabilitation intake procedures, vocational assessment, the special education curriculum, the regional occupational program, and the vocational incentive training program.

In Utica, the initial grant proposal submitted for project funding provides guidelines for the operation of the cooperative program. The proposal states project objectives, outlines functions and duties of the project staff, and provides a structure for outstationing of vocational rehabilitation counselors. It also sets out a detailed timetable for project implementation. The project staff uses the mechanism of written meeting summaries to modify or expand upon the operations outlined in the proposal. The project staff has also developed a series of written policies and procedures. For their work experience program, for example, they have developed guidelines dealing with such matters as application procedures, job site development, discipline policy, and labor market orientation. Utica is, however, resistant to the development of any formal interagency agreement at the state or local level. The project staff expresses the fear that a formal agreement would harm the project's ability to be flexible and efficient.

On the basis of the programs studied, it does not appear that development of an interagency agreement is a prerequisite to success of cooperative programs. In all instances, however, some type of written guidelines have been developed for orderly program administration. In some instances, moreover, the development of an agreement has been an important first step in initiating cooperation. In others, development of an agreement has been a way of maintaining the cooperative efforts previously initiated. The importance of an agreement appears to depend heavily upon the perspective of the individuals involved in the cooperative effort and the usual methods of conducting programs in the state/area. It appears that the larger and more widespread a program becomes, the more the need for a state-level agreement is perceived. It is important, however, to adopt an approach which preserves local initiative and flexibility.

4. Staff Positions Used in Cooperative Programs

One of the critical elements in the success of a cooperative program is the development of a team to carry out its mandate. Thus, many of the programs visited have been characterized by innovative use of staff positions and by growing use of interdisciplinary staff members. The development of state-level coordinator positions has been discussed above in Section 2. This Section will focus on positions developed for local use.

(See accompanying chart, Examples of Staff Postions Used in Cooperative Programs.)

One commonality among the site visit programs has been the development of a group of vocational rehabilitation counselors with experience in working with youth and knowledge of special education and vocational education programs. These counselors may be assigned a school caseload as in Michigan, North Dakota and Missouri or they may be actually placed within the school system as in South Carolina, Torrance, California, and parts of Oklahoma. In Utica, New York, an entire Youth Unit has been developed within the local vocational rehabilitation office to concentrate on school issues. The counselors in the Youth Unit are outstationed in various school systems.

The involvement of these counselors with the site programs has increased attention to vocational goals for students and has facilitated coordination between IEP's and IWRP's. They have performed a wide variety of functions ranging from job development and job placement to consultation on vocational education curriculum preparation. They have played an important role in providing vocational counseling and support to students, many of whom have a history of failure and are difficult to work with. Their presence also eases the student's transition from the school system into the adult service system and the world of work.

There is also a growing use of interdisciplinary personnel who serve as a link between the academic program and the vocational program. Nearly every site has developed positions of this type. The staff titles include vocational resource educators (VRE's), vocational student tutors, student services coordinators and work study coordinators. Their functions include developing vocational objectives for IEP's; providing information to vocational education instructors on the special needs of their students; providing additional assistance to handicapped students during or after class; modifying the curriculum; and working with special education teachers to insure that vocational and academic programming are integrated. There was general agreement that the support provided by these personnel is crucial if handicapped students are to benefit from vocational education.

The cooperative programs have also developed a variety of staff positions related to the provision of work experience for special needs students. The most common type of position is that of a special education teacher who has responsibility for supervising students in work placements. The teacher is released from portions of his/her teaching duties in order to concentrate on work experience students. A program which makes use of this type of position is Torrance, California. Torrance employs a campus coordinator in each of its four high schools. They recruit students for the cooperative program, refer applications to VR and serve as vocational counselors for younger students. They also serve as the liaison between the academic program and the job for students in work experience. Oklahoma and Illinois employ

teacher coordinators who perform similar functions. Illinois also uses prevocational coordinators. They are members of the special education staff who are responsible for job development, job supervision, and other job-related matters. South Carolina uses Production Coordinators, special education teachers who supervise students in school-based Work Adjustment Centers. Missouri uses Vocational Adjustment Counselors (VAC's) who are special education teachers responsible for job development, placement, and supervision.

Several of the site visit programs have developed unique positions, particularly suited to particular program needs. Torrance, California for example has developed the position of community coordinator. The community coordinator is, essentially, a job developer employed by the school system. He works full-time, meeting with members of the business community and encouraging them to accept students for on-the-job training. He is also responsible for matching students with positions and for taking preliminary steps to insure that placements are successful. Torrance also employs an instructional aide who trains students in job seeking skills.

Illinois has developed a special Vocational Adjustment Counselor (VAC) program. The VAC is a rehabilitation counselor housed within the school system but funded by VR on a third-party match basis. The VAC program was created to meet the need of areas with a high volume of cases. The VAC performs the same duties as a VR counselor but serves only a specialized school caseload. The VAC program provides a mechanism for expanding rehabilitation services without expanding the vocational rehabilitation staff.

5. Data Collection and Evaluation

The site visit programs vary in the extent to which they have collected data and evaluated program impact. The most sophisticated system belongs to California's Project Work Ability. As the Work Ability model was developed, an evaluation plan to document and measure immediate outcomes was also put in place. The evaluation plan employs a single-page student reporting form and records information on type of disability, severity of handicap, employment limitation, educational setting, vocational services received, and future plans. A project reporting format was also developed to structure narrative descriptions of local programs. The information collected has been used in the preparation of comprehensive evaluation reports indicating program out-comes and trends.

In Oklahoma a yearly evaluation of the cooperative program is conducted to assess effectiveness and to keep services current. The evaluation employs review teams composed of vocational rehabilitation, special education, and local school personnel. Approximately half of the schools involved in the program are visited. In addition, all statistics and accomplishments of the previous year are reviewed.

EXAMPLES OF STAFF POSITIONS USED IN COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS
Local Positions

COOPERATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAM

TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA

- Rehabilitation Counselors
  VR Counselors placed within school system
- Campus Coordinators
  Special education teachers who work with rehabilitation counselors in operating cooperative programs
- Community Coordinator
  Job developer employed by school system
- Vocational Student Tutor
  Teacher employed by school district to serve as liaison between special education and vocational education programming - placed at Regional Occupational Center
- VR Assistant
  Instructional Aide who trains students in job seeking skills

COOPERATIVE SCHOOL REHABILITATION WORK-STUDY PROGRAM STATE OF CALIFORNIA

- VR Counselors
  VR counselors assigned a school caseload, and, in some instances, placed within school system
- Teacher Coordinators
  Special education teachers who supervise students in work

INTERAGENCY SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES FOR THE HANDICAPPED STATE OF MICHIGAN

- VR Counselors
  VR counselors assigned a school caseload
- Student Services Coordinator
  Person employed by vocational school to provide linkage with special education programming and (later) with VR counselor
- Work Study Coordinator
  Special education teacher employed by home schools to provide consultation to vocational school staff
- Special Needs Project Staff
  Paraprofessionals who work with students in vocational school classes, counselor-coordinator who act as resource personnel for students, and remedial reading and math instructors - employed by vocational school

(Continued)

EXAMPLES OF STAFF POSITIONS USED IN COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS
Local Positions

NORTH DAKOTA INTERAGENCY COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

STATE OF
NORTH DAKOTA

- VR Counselors
  VR counselors assigned a school caseload
- Vocational Resource Educators (VRE's)
  Members of vocational education staff who are trained in special education and serve as liaison with special education and VR

PROJECT WORK ABILITY

STATE OF
CALIFORNIA

- Site Managers
  Staff members designated by LEA's to direct local implementation of project

RICHLAND COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 2, VR PUBLIC SCHOOL COOPERATIVE PROGRAM
RICHLAND COUNTY,
SOUTH CAROLINA

- Rehabilitation Counselor
  VR counselor based in high school and assigned a school case load
- Project Supervisor
  VR counselor who is responsible for operation of Work Adjustment Center
- Production Coordinators
  Special education teacher who supervise students in Work Adjustment Center

(Continued)

EXAMPLES OF STAFF POSITIONS USED IN COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS
Local Positions

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL DISTRICT

ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI

- VR Counselors
  VR counselors assigned a school caseload
- Vocational Adjustment Counselors (VAC's)
  Special education teachers who are responsible for job development, placement, and supervision
- Vocational Resource Educators (VRE's)
  A professional funded by special education and vocational education to serve as a resource to students in vocational education

SECONDARY WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM AND VOCATIONAL ADJUSTMENT COUNSELORS PROGRAM
STATE OF ILLINOIS

- VR Counselors
  VR counselors assigned a school caseload
- Vocational Adjustment Counselors (VAC's)
  Rehabilitation counselors housed within school system - funded by VR on third-party match basis
- Prevocational Coordinators
  A member of the special education staff who is responsible for job development, job supervision and other job-related matters

VORSE II PROJECT

UTICA, NEW YORK

- VR Youth Unit
  Unit in VR district office - supervisor and 7 VR counselors who concentrate on school population

(Concluded)

EXAMPLES of STAFF POSITIONS USED in COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS

State-Level Positions

COOPERATIVE SCHOOL/REHABILITATION WORK-STUDY PROGRAM STATE of OKLAHOMA	INTERAGENCY SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM for VOCATIONAL EDUCATION and RELATED SERVICES for the HANDICAPPED STATE of MICHIGAN	PROJECT WORK ABILITY STATE of CALIFORNIA	SECONDARY WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM and VOCATIONAL ADJUSTMENT COUNSELORS PROGRAM STATE of ILLINOIS
• Supervisor of Third Party Programs State-level Coordinator funded by VR	• VR Services Program Development Consultant State-level agency representative • VTE Services Special Needs Consultant State-level agency representative • Special Education Services Consultant State-level agency representative • Special Needs/Interagency Coordinator Person employed at state-level to develop and implement state-wide training model	• Project Director State-level coordinator placed within Division of Vocational and Continuing Education	• Program Administrator State-level coordinator funded by VR

In the majority of the programs visited, data collection primarily takes the form of collection of vocational rehabilitation case closure information. The information collected to date (e.g., South Carolina, Torrance, California, Utica, New York) indicates that cooperative programs can close a higher number of cases at a lower cost than the average vocational rehabilitation program.

C. Staff Development Training and Dissemination Efforts

Barriers to collaboration can result from the lack of familiarity with different agencies' mandates, policies and job responsibilities. Cross-agency inservice training can foster communication and understanding in order to aid in the development of programs involving interagency coordination.

In some instances training activities are directed toward expanding the use of the state interagency agreement in order to implement local programs. However, other state and local inservice training activities are aimed at lending support to an already existing cooperative effort. Locally-initiated programs develop training activities to disseminate the program concept to other parts of the state or to other states.

The purpose of the cross-agency inservice training activities in North Dakota, Michigan, Vermont and Maine was to implement the state-level agreement at the local level and thus encourage the development of local cooperative programs. As discussed in the planning section of this report, the success of this training method depends on follow-up support and monitoring by an interagency committee or staff person(s).

It should be noted that Massachusetts undertook a collaborative state-level training effort independent of a formal cooperative agreement. The Department of Education (both Divisions of Special Education and Occupational Education), the Rehabilitation Commission and the Department of Manpower Development (CETA) collaborated on a staff development program on interagency colaboration to improve vocational services for handicapped youth. The purpose of the cross-agency inservice training was to foster closer working relationships between the local VR, CETA and education agencies.

The California state-wide interagency effort, Project Work Ability, did not depend on state-wide training to implement the program at the original 34 program sites. However, continual training and support is provided by a state program coordinator and the conduct of program manager conferences. At these conferences, site managers receive training and assistance in management and programmatic concerns. Inservice training activities will also be utilized to publicize the Work Ability concept and to expand program operation. Five of the original program sites have received funding to provide inservice training to interested school districts.

State-wide staff training is sometimes offered as support for local cooperative efforts. In Missouri, inservice training is provided via Missouri LINC which is operated by the University of Missouri-Columbia. The project offers special needs resource information and technical assistance to vocational and special educators. The main objective of LINC is to impact upon the employment potential of SPED students by providing instructional personnel with the needed skills and information. This is

accomplished through various LINC publications and credit-granting workshops and conferences.

Inservice training on interagency coordination often ends once a cooperative program has been instituted. Nevertheless, interagency activities usually benefit from periodic inservice training sessions. In Oklahoma an annual statewide two-day summer workshop is conducted in order to disseminate new information concerning the needs of special education students and to exchange ideas and information between VR counselors and school personnel. These workshops are important for sharing concerns and successes, resolving problems and discussing issues pertaining to the cooperative program. Most importantly, these workshops offer the chance for staff revitalization. In North Dakota, the Steering Committee determined that another round of state-wide inservice training was needed to revitalize and update the state and local level agreements.

Sometimes a locally initiated program becomes a state model of a successful cooperative program. Dissemination activities therefore occur in order to publicize the program and to encourage other areas to start similar programs. The VR coordinator of the VORSE II program in Utica, New York, is actively involved in the conduct of training workshops in other parts of New York state. In addition, this person has been asked to conduct training sessions in other states.

The Torrance Cooperative School Program has long been recognized in the state of California as a model program and various school districts around the state have expressed an interest in learning more about it. As a result, program staff members have done several workshops covering the various components of the program. A package of explanatory materials has also been prepared for dissemination at workshops and presentations.

D. Vocational Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

1. Vocational Assessment

Vocational assessment of handicapped students has been an area of confusion and concern for many educational personnel. This is reflected in the variety of formal and informal vocational assessments provided by VR and education at the visited program sites. Even for state-wide programs, vocational assessments differed according to school districts. Vocational assessments ranged from paper and pencil tests of achievement and/or interests to manipulative measures of dexterity or skill levels. At some program sites there were no formal vocational assessments completed. Vocational goals were, therefore, based on school personnel's, and at times the VR Counselors' perceptions and evaluations of the student's abilities and work potential.

Results of the vocational assessments were used primarily to establish vocational goals for the Individualized Education Program (IEP). In some instances the results of the vocational assessments were used to develop comprehensive programming plans which indicated the vocational programming needs of the disabled students. This could include decisions as to placement in work experience, work study or skill training programs.

Vocational rehabilitation, in most of the visited programs, maintained the capability of providing formal vocational evaluations in order to determine appropriate services for their clients. For example, in Oklahoma and Fargo, North Dakota the schools utilize VR for vocational evaluation services when there is a serious question as to a student's skills or level of functioning or upon parental request. However, because the evaluation is lengthy (usually two weeks) and too complex for educational purposes, school personnel are beginning to develop simple short-term vocational assessments for use with disabled students. Also, with schools becoming more oriented to inclusion of vocational objectives in the IEP, there is a recognition of the need to develop assessments upon which to base these objectives.

The development of vocational evaluation centers within the school system is an outgrowth of the need to develop a short-term evaluation. The Cooperative School Program in Torrance, California; the California Work Ability project of North Orange County Regional Occupational Program (NOCROP); the cooperative program of the Special Education District of Lake County (SEDOL), Illinois; and, the cooperative program in St. Joseph, Missouri operate vocational evaluation centers in order to provide vocational assessments appropriate for school use. VR also has access to the evaluation results and therefore is able to develop a better understanding of incoming clients. This also results in reduction of VR costs because VR does not have to duplicate assessments already undertaken by the schools.

These centers provide two-to-three day assessments which eliminate many of the scheduling problems which occurred as a result of the lengthy VR evaluations. Vocational assessments offered at these centers generally include: worker trait assessments, vocational exploration, interest assessments, and aptitude and achievement tests. The resulting vocational evaluation reports are used by school personnel to establish vocational goals for the IEP, to determine vocational programming needs and to help in determining work experience or work/study placements.

In Torrance, California the paper and pencil portion of the vocational evaluation is conducted at the high schools, thus requiring only one day of travel to the center. Because of difficulties in school, many disabled students have negative feelings associated with traditional paper and pencil type tests. Conducting this portion of the vocational evaluation on campus helps ensure that the students attending the center approach the manipulative tests in a positive manner.

More informal types of assessments are practiced at program sites in Oklahoma, California and North Dakota. Because vocational assessment is an area which needs development within these sites, SPED Directors, teachers and VR counselors are attempting to develop more formal vocational assessment procedures. For example, in Oklahoma the responsibility for developing a vocational assessment is shared by the teacher coordinators and by the VR counselor assigned to the school. At one school, the VR counselor is solely responsible for compiling and conducting three to four vocational assessment tests. The results are used in developing the IEP and the Individual Written Rehabilitation Program (IWRP). In Fargo, North Dakota the Vocational Resource Educator (VRE) and/or the special education teacher will use some assessment instruments on an informal basis in order to establish the vocational portion of the IEP.

Whether or not formal vocational evaluations accurately indicate a student's skill level and vocational capabilities and potential is an area of debate. Some professionals maintain that the most realistic way to determine a student's vocational ability is to assess the student while in an actual work situation. The term "hands-on" assessment is used to signify this type of evaluation procedure.

The VR/JTPA summer work experience program in the Utica, New York area is used as a vocational evaluation tool. Reports are developed assessing the students' performance during the summer program. This report is shared with the schools. Many of the school personnel felt that these reports would be even more useful if the reporting format related directly to the school program.

SEDOL, besides using the Vocational Assessment Lab, employs two additional resources for performing vocational evaluations. The Model Office and Project Hamburger Day are both a form of "hands-

on" assessment. Students are evaluated in the Model Office which is set up as an actual job site with eight work stations. Students are assigned to the Model Office for five week sessions and receive assignments in areas such as duplication, collation, binding, and lamination. Students work six hours per week at a rate of $2.00 per hour. Their work attitudes and behaviors are assessed and a written evaluation is prepared at the end of the session. Project Hamburger Day is a special evaluation program at a separate facility for trainable mentally handicapped students. The program involves four weeks of evaluation and training in skills related to fast food preparation. For two full days per week students participate in a simulated restaurant operation, performing such tasks as set up, food preparation, and cash register operation. Students are paid for their work and are evaluated on the basis of their work behavior. Vocational evaluation results are incorporated in both IEP's and IWRP's.

2. IEP Development

The vocational segment of the IEP varies considerably from site to site. In some schools one or several written pages are devoted to vocational programming concerns, while in other schools vocational objectives are described in one or two paragraphs. Many of the IEP's reflect conclusionary goals, for example, stating that the student will participate in a work experience program. Other school districts will carefully describe the steps leading to a vocational goal, thus preparing a comprehensive vocational plan for inclusion in the IEP.

As discussed, most program sites use some method of informal or formal vocational assessments in order to determine vocational goals for the IEP. In addition, some school districts have prepared special materials to assist in development of vocational objectives and goals. The New York State School for the Deaf in Rome is particularly noteworthy for preparing a curriculum guide to aid in the development of vocational objectives for the IEP's of severely handicapped hearing impaired students, including some residents of local institutions for mentally retarded/mentally ill persons. The guide, entitled Steps Toward Educating People for Survival (STEPS), contains over 125 objectives relating to independent living and work related skills. The work related skills cover such areas as dressing, social behaviors, materials/tools, safety, pay, and VR functions. The categories are related to a five level work experience program in which students progress from teacher - supervised in-class jobs to competitive off-campus employment. The categories are introduced gradually and objectives are added as the individual student acquires more complex skills. For example, a student might move from a pre-level objective of telling time to a level IV objective of computing overtime. In the area of hiring, a student might move from a level I objective of understanding a job description to a level III objective of requesting references, writing a resume, and reading want ads. The STEPS

curriculum is considered a working curriculum and is constantly revised and updated with input from the VR counselor stationed at the school.

In Torrance, California the IEP contains a separate section relating to prevocational/vocational issues. The formal vocational evaluations are used to prepare the vocational goals. The Special Education Department has also prepared prevocational/vocational skills checklists which can be used in conjunction with the IEP and help supplement the vocational evaluations.

For the majority of program sites, special education personnel are primarily responsible for coordinating with vocational rehabilitation and vocational education and preparing the vocational portion of the IEP. The degree of involvement of vocational education and vocational rehabilitation varies from site to site. However, in Fargo, North Dakota, the Vocational Resource Educator from vocational education is responsible for coordinating with SPED teachers and VR counselors in order to write the vocational portion of the IEP.

3. IEP/IWRP Coordination

Most program sites attempt some form of coordination between the development of the IEP and the development of the IWRP. In general, the IWRP's reflect the vocational goals described in the IEP's. In some instances, the IEP is attached to the IWRP. The existence of a VR counselor in the high school or a VR counselor primarily responsible for a student caseload positively affects IEP/IWRP coordination. The VR counselors in these instances are more likely to be familiar with the students' academic and vocational programming and often are involved in the IEP meetings. Some programs have developed a systematic procedure for IEP/IWRP coordination while at other program sites, the coordination is more informal and based on personal requests.

The IWRP is usually prepared after the development of the IEP. Therefore, the degree to which VR is involved in IEP development can affect how much the vocational portion of the IEP is described in the IWRP. The responsibility for developing the IWRP usually rests with the VR counselor who will try to ensure that the IEP is accurately incorporated into the IWRP. However, in St. Joseph, Missouri, the VR counselor develops the IWRP jointly with school personnel.

The Department of Rehabilitation and the Torrance Unified School District considered the development of a combined IEP/IWRP. Potential advantages listed were "insured continuity of planning, closer communication between DR and Education, and a clearer direction for the client/student". Representatives of DR and the school system met to develop a draft form but eventually abandoned the attempt. The group determined that the cost in terms of changing procedures and schedules and the need for extra manpower would not justify a combined form. Moreover, the group

felt that they were already receiving the benefits listed above by virtue of their current extensive cooperation. They concluded that when Rehabilitation and Education are already cooperating successfully the need for a combined form is simply not present.

E. Programming

1. Increasing Participation in Vocational Education

A growing number of programs are focusing on ways to increase the participation of handicapped students in vocational education. The concept that career/vocational education is essential for handicapped students in order to aid their transition from school to work provides the stimulus for many of the program offerings reviewed. Combining vocational and academic programming represents a shift in policy for many high schools which have traditionally held that disabled students must reach a certain level of academic competence before vocational considerations can be addressed.

The trend toward a competency-based vocational education and training curriculum in vocational-technical schools provides the needed flexibility to increase the numbers of handicapped students in vocational-technical education. An open entry/open exit school program also increases a vocational-technical school's ability and willingness to enroll handicapped students. Michigan, Missouri, California, and Oklahoma all provide examples of vocational-technical schools which have demonstrated success in this area. Handicapped students are able to participate in a wide variety of vocational offerings. They receive certificates for different levels of accomplishment which are matched with actual job possibilities. The certificates are recognized in the community as an indication of competence in the areas listed and greatly enhance a student's ability to obtain employment. When the curriculum is designed to accommodate the learning needs and capabilities of all students and is associated closely with the competencies needed at various levels in various jobs, handicapped youth benefit greatly.

Even in programs which are not competency-based, efforts are being undertaken to make the vocational curriculum more appropriate to the needs of handicapped students. In Illinois and North Dakota, for example, special education and vocational education teachers have worked together to adapt vocational offerings. Instructional materials have been revised, books have been taped, longer times have been allowed for completion of tasks, and tests have been rewritten or administered orally.

In the Utica, New York program one of the schools visited had developed a special exploratory program for special needs students. Members of the special eduction staff and the vocational education staff worked together with VEA funds to establish the program. The program includes a shop component covering such areas as construction trades, building maintenance, and agriculture and a home economics component covering such areas as food service, office and retail, and child care. Students rotate through each area for five weeks and are reviewed and evaluated at the end of the year. They can stay in the program as long as necessary before making the transition into regular vocational education.

As mentioned earlier, handicapped student participation in vocational education has been aided by the growing use of interdisciplinary personnel who serve as a link between the academic and vocational program (see Administration/Structure, above). It has also been aided by the fact that special education teachers are becoming more aware of vocational education programs and vocational education teachers are becoming more aware of special education programs.

2. Increasing Vocational Orientation in Special Education

The cooperative programs have not only been successful in increasing handicapped student participation in vocational education. They have also been very successful in fostering an increase in vocational awareess within special education programs. Nearly every site visited provided examples of this.

In Michigan the special education curriculum has been modified to complement vocational course offerings and, in Missouri, prevocational and personal adjustment skills have been incorporated into the special education curriculum. In Oklahoma special education provides training in career awareness and exploration and job-seeking and retention skills. In Torrance, California, similarly, special education teachers provide career orientation classes.

Several of the special education cooperatives visited in Illinois had done extensive work on making the special education curriculum responsive to vocational needs. For example, in one cooperative, special education classes include work on purchasing habits, work attitudes and habits, survival skills, and job orientation skills. There is also a special class each year on filling out a W-4 form, preparing income tax returns, and similar matters. In addition, the academic program can be individually modified to address areas necessary for successful performance in work experience placements. In the case of a student working at a gas station, a math objective was developed relating to making change and processing credit cards. For a student working in a nursing home, classes in nutrition were added to the curriculum.

In a North Dakota high school visited, special education teachers are responsible for prevocational programming and help special education students to explore the world of work. They organize field trips and cover items such as social security cards, time cards, pay checks, and bank accounts. As students become more advanced, they learn to fill out application forms and undergo practice job interviews. In addition to the prevocational offerings, students receive job-related information throughout their special education academic program. For example, in reading classes, students might go over want ads or names of tools. In math classes, students often work on banking skills, totaling menu prices, or figuring sales tax.

3. Use of Work Experience

Provision of work experience for handicapped students is the focal point of a number of the programs visited. In these programs handicapped students are placed in actual jobs in the community or in the school and receive a salary and/or school credit for their efforts. Michigan and North Dakota were the only programs visited which did not use work experience extensively.

In the most well-developed work experience programs, work experience is part of a continuum of vocational services. In these programs, work experience is directly related to vocational education courses and adds an apprenticeship element to the vocational program. Examples of programs of this type include California's Project Work Ability, Torrance, California's Cooperative School Program, and segments of Oklahoma's Work-Study Program.

Students participating in Project Work Ability undergo diagnostic assessment and receive vocational training in their local high school or through the Regional Occupational Program/Center. Students are then matched with jobs appropriate to their background and interests. Job developers from the Employment Development Department work closely with school and rehabilitation personnel in this process.

Students in Torrance, California undergo a comprehensive vocational evaluation and, when ready to work, are placed in a very sheltered work environment within the school system. In the 11th grade, they can attend the Regional Occupational Center (ROC). After they have participated in on-campus work experience and have begun ROC training, they are generally ready to test their skills in the community. At this point, they are referred to the campus Coordinator, a school-based job developer who places them according to their interests and their ROC training.

In one of the Oklahoma vocational schools visited, teacher coordinators and VR counselors work to place students in jobs matched to their vocational training. For example, a student receiving carpentry training might receive a placement involving framing houses.

In all of the work experience programs reviewed, the program staff worked to tailor the placement to the student's special needs. Placements are developed in light of a student's skills, behaviors, and aptitudes. In some programs, work experience provides a substitute for vocational programming which is not otherwise available. This was true in Illinois, for example. Even in these programs, however, student participation in work experience has generated needed services and stimulated interest in vocational programming. It has also provided some concrete successes for students who have not done well in the academic program.

Utica, New York has developed a strong summer work experience program which is unique in several aspects. By using a job coach model, the program is able to place very severely handicapped youth in jobs in the community. The program also makes a practice of hiring school personnel to work in the summer program. Teachers, social workers, guidance counselors, and principals serve as OJT instructors and coordinators. For many of them, the summer program provides an introduction to vocational rehabilitation services and a new awareness of the vocational potential of handicapped students.

The most usual work experience placements are in food service, custodial operations, automotive operations, and as office assistants. However, placements differ according to the economic base of the area and the needs of the students. For example, students have been placed at dairy farms, on fishing boats, and at an airport. Torrance, California has over eighty employers who provide on-the-job training and several Illinois programs place students throughout large Veterans Administration Hospital complexes. Program personnel have made use of both large and small businesses for work experience placements. Small businesses are felt to be better able to provide individual attention and often welcome the extra help provided by students. Large businesses, on the other hand, often have affirmative action programs and may view participation as a community service opportunity.

The programs differed in the method of student compensation. In Missouri and Oklahoma, students are compensated by employers. In Illinois and Torrance, California, their compensation comes from VR case service dollars. In Utica, New York, and Project Work Ability in California, JTPA funds (and previously CETA funds) contribute to student stipends. Project Work Ability has also used state Youth Employment Development Act funds and a variety of state, local and federal sources for stipends. All programs agreed that identifying a stable continuing source of funding for stipends is an issue which needs further attention.

F. Summary

Collaborative programs between vocational rehabilitation, special education and vocational education take many forms and provide many types of services. However, all the programs visited agreed that providing a coordinated continuum of services to aid disabled youth's movement from school into competitive employment or additional transitional services requires interagency coordination. To accomplish this goal various program strategies have been developed.

- Planning

The nine programs that were studied generally fall into three different planning categories: state agreement and state-wide training, pilot projects and program expansion, and local initiative. Even though planning methods varied for each program, analysis points out several common planning elements which contribute to effective and lasting collaborative efforts.

- Administration/Structure

Analysis of the programs indicated that state organizational structure for vocational rehabilitation, special education and vocational education does not determine the success of cooperative efforts. However, the existence of a coordinator to maintain the cooperative effort is considered critically important. There are also differences in the use of written agreements to govern operations. In addition, it does not appear that the development of a state-level interagency agreement is a prerequisite to the success of cooperative programs.

One of the critical elements in the success of an interagency program is the development of a team to carry out its mandate. This involves the innovative use of staff positions and the growing use of interdisciplinary staff members to serve as a link between academic and vocational programming. One commonality among all the programs is the development of a group of VR counselors with experience in working with youth and knowledge of special education and vocational education programs. Many of the staff positions which have been developed relate to the provision of work experience.

- Staff Development Training and Dissemination Efforts

Cross-agency in-service training can foster communication and interest to aid in the development of programs involving interagency coordination. Training activities are directed toward expanding the use of state agreements to implement local programs or are aimed at lending support to an already existing cooperative effort.

• Vocational Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

The cooperative programs used a variety of formal and informal vocational assessments. Vocational assessments ranged from paper and pencil tests of achievement and/or interest to manipulative measures of dexterity or skill levels. Some sites completed no formal vocational assessments but relied on staff perception of students' capabilities.

In most of the programs VR maintains the capability of providing formal vocational evaluations. However, these evaluations are usually too lengthy and complex for educational purposes. The development of vocational evaluation centers within school systems is an outgrowth of the need to develop short-term evaluations. More informal types of short-term assessments are also practiced at various sites. "Hands on" assessments are also used to assess a student's capabilities realistically.

The vocational format of the IEP varies considerably from site to site. Many IEP's only reflect conclusionary goals while other IEP's describe the steps leading to the vocational goals. Most program sites use some method of informal or formal vocational assessment in order to determine vocational goals for the IEP. In addition, some school districts have prepared special materials to assist in development of vocational objectives and goals.

Most program sites attempt some form of coordination between the development of the IEP and the development of the IWRP. In general, the IWRP's reflect the vocational goals described in the IEP's.

• Programming

A growing number of programs are focusing on ways to increase the participation of handicapped students in vocational education. The concept that career/vocational education is essential for handicapped students in order to aid their transition from school to work provides the stimulus for many of the program offerings.

The trend toward a competency-based vocational education and training curriculum in vocational-technical schools provides the needed flexibility to increase the numbers of handicapped students in vocational-technical education. Even in programs which are not competency-based, efforts are being undertaken to make the vocational curriculum more appropriate to the needs of handicapped students. The cooperative programs have not only been successful in increasing handicapped student participation in vocational education. They have also been very successful in fostering an increase in vocational awareness within special education programs.

The provision of work experience for handicapped students is the focal point of a number of the programs visited. In the most well-developed work experience programs, work experience is part

of a continuum of vocational services. In all of the work experience programs reviewed, the program staff worked to tailor the placement to the student's special needs. For some programs, work experience provides a substitute for vocational programming which is not otherwise available. Even in these programs, however, student participation in work experience has generated needed services and stimulated interest in vocational programming.

SECTION II

COOPERATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAM

TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA

SITE VISIT: JANUARY 25 - 26, 1984

Background Information

Torrance is a community of 135,000 located in Southern California. The Torrance Unified School District serves 20,000 students (K-12). Of these, approximately 7500 are high school students, attending one of four regular high schools or a small continuation high school.

Torrance has a history of strong school-community interaction. The School Board meets periodically with the City Council. The School District also benefits from a number of long-standing partnerships with local businesses and organizations. The Torrance area has a good deal of business and industry and a large number of employers in the area have shown an interest in job training and placement of handicapped persons. The focal point for local efforts relating to occupational preparation of handicapped youth is the Cooperative School Program. The Cooperative School Program is run jointly by the Torrance Unified School District and the State Department of Rehabilitation, L.A. Coastal District. It offers a broad continuum of service including identification, assessment, skill training, and work experience in which an incentive training allowance is paid. The thrust of the program is early intervention to better prepare students to obtain full-time employment after high school.

The Cooperative School Program is unique because it is based on an equal partnership between the Department of Rehabilitation (DR) and the School District. DR places two Rehabilitation Counselors in the school system and also provides case service dollars for the incentive training allowance. The School District matches this commitment with staff time consisting of special education teachers, a resource teacher, an assessment center, district administrators, and in-kind service. This joint commitment has resulted in an unusually strong and comprehensive program. The Cooperative School Program, which has been in operation for ten years, has been able to place an average of sixty students per year in non-subsidized employment. During the 1983-84 school year, eighty-one students were placed, a record high. The production of the two Rehabilitation Counselors placed in the school system is in the upper third of the L.A. Coastal District which has the highest production in the state.

The Cooperative School Program currently serves almost 400 students, with approximately 100 students in work experience.

The majority of students served have specific learning disabilities (61%) but a wide variety of disabilities appear in the caseload.*

Planning

The Cooperative School Program had its origins in several VR third-party programs established in the late sixties in individual schools within the Torrance District. Around 1972, DR began to express dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of these programs and contemplated their termination. At this time the Cooperative School Program was assigned to the Coordinator of Career Education. The Coordinator of Career Education arranged for six months in which to demonstrate the viability of the cooperative concept and worked to build a strong base of support for the effort. Commitments were obtained from the Superintendent and the Board of Education to continue a cooperative program with DR.

Students were placed in work stations on campus and began to demonstrate a big change in attitude and behavior. As a result the program began to catch the attention of the high school principals who soon became major supporters. More students were directed into the system and, as they neared completion of high school, the number of successful case closures greatly increased. The Board of Education agreed to fund a full-time resource person to work with the community on placement.

One of the most unique aspects of the development of the Cooperative School Program has been the role of Vocational Education. Vocational Education has had continuing responsibility for administering the program since its establishment on a district-wide basis. A number of persons involved with the program have cited Vocational Education's role as a critical factor in its success. Vocational Education's active involvement ensures a continuing emphasis on the importance of vocational goals for special education students.

The School District's commitment to the Cooperative School Program has remained constant, despite declining enrollment and large cutbacks in other areas. The Board of Education has been very supportive and one member has taken a particular interest in the program. The Board receives periodic briefings on the

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*Disabilities in Caseloads as of 12/31/83

TMR	3%	Orthopedic	5%
EMR	17%	Psych/Neurotic	2%
SLD	61%	Personality Disorder	1%
Visual	2%	Other	5%
Hearing	3%		

program (along with other outstanding programs in the District) and its success stories are well known to Board Members. (The program's success affected them in a direct way when a student who started working as a gardener in the program eventually became a supervising custodian for the School District).

Administration/Structure

The Cooperative School Program is based on a matched staff concept. As mentioned above, the Department of Rehabilitation provides two Rehabilitation Counselors and also contributes case service dollars for the incentive training allowance. The School District matches this commitment with staff time and in-kind services. The most recent figures available show the contributions of the participants to be as follows:

Department of Rehabilitation	Torrance Unified School District
2 Full-Time Rehabilitation Counselors	1 Full-Time VR Resource Teacher (Community Coordinator)
1 Full-Time Office Technician	4 Special Education Teachers (released 2 classes)
1 Program Supervisor at 10-15%	1 Coordinator of Vocational Education at 10%
Funds for Incentive Training Allowance ($63,950 in 1982-83)	1 Part-Time Administrative Consultant
	1 Part-Time VR Assistant
	1 Vocational Assessment Evaluator
	1 Part-Time Vocational Assessment Aide
	1 Part-Time ROP Tutor
	Space for DR Personnel
	Accounting/Payroll Services
	Support of Special Education Department

When the Cooperative School Program began, the parties made use of a very detailed contract to spell out the obligations on each side. They found this approach to be too restrictive and moved to a memorandum of understanding. Now the program operates without any formal written agreement. The Department of Rehabilitation accepts the placement of two counselors in the Torrance Unified School District as part of the established scheme of things and the program is similarly entrenched from the School District perspective.

As noted earlier, the Cooperative School Program offers students a broad continuum of service beginning in Grade 9. Students are identified and go through intake in the 9th grade. They undergo vocational evaluations in the 10th grade and receive instruction in job survival skills. They may also participate in in-school work experience. In the 11th grade, students receive specialized

vocational training in their home schools or at the Southern California Regional Occupational Center (SCROC). Those students who are ready can also enter on-the-job training in the community. Twelfth grade students continue with vocational training, begin or continue with on-the-job training, and participate in a job-seeking skills course. Throughout the process, students receive large amounts of vocational counseling from the program staff.

The program staff operate as a team and the entire group meets monthly. Although the program operation is extremely flexible, each team member has a specific role to play in providing the continuum of service outlined above. The Coordinator of Career Education (Director of Vocational Education) is responsible for overall administration of the program within the School District. The Career Education Consultant is responsible for accountability and paperwork and coordinates the monthly meeting of the program staff.* Both administrators provide support and input to other program staff members.

The first contact a student has with the Cooperative School Program is likely to be through the Campus Coordinators. The Campus Coordinators are special education teachers who are released from two periods per day in order to concentrate on the cooperative program. There is one Campus Coordinator in each of the four Torrance high schools. The Campus Coordinators recruit students for the Cooperative School Program and refer their applications to the Rehabilitation Counselors. They also serve as vocational counselors for the younger students in the program. The Campus Coordinators place 10th grade students in "sheltered" jobs on campus or within the School District. When students are ready to work in the community, the Campus Coordinators work with the Community Coordinator (described below) to place them in on-the-job training based on their interests and abilities. They serve as the liaison between the academic program and the job and they visit each site once or twice a month. They collect time sheets and evaluation sheets. They maintain regular contact with students, parents, and supervisors to resolve any issues which may arise. They also work with employers on quarterly reports of student performance.

The Campus Coordinators work very closely with the two Rehabilitation Counselors who are placed in the School District. Since eligibility for DR services is a requirement for participation in the Cooperative School Program, all applications must be channeled to the Rehabilitation Counselors. The Counselors generally receive student applications in the spring of 9th grade. They also receive eligibility-related information from the school psychologist and the school nurse so that less time is needed to

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*Assistant principals, department chairs, special eduction staff and various DR staff members are also invited to these meetings.

determine eligibility. The Counselors generally develop IWRP's for eligible students during the summer or during 10th grade school year. One Rehabilitation Counselor works mostly with visually impaired and orthopedically impaired students. The other Counselor works mostly with mentally retarded students, although she also has responsibility for emotionally disturbed and hearing impaired students. Both Counselors have learning disabled students in their caseloads.

The Rehabilitation Counselors make sure that all 10th grade students accepted for the program receive vocational evaluations and they also go over evaluation results with individual students. The Rehabilitation Counselors refer students to the SCROC Tutor for a tour so that this option for vocational training can be explored. They also make sure that vocational evaluation information goes to the SCROC tutor.

The Rehabilitation Counselors also work with the students placed in work sites by the Campus Coordinators. They focus particularly on reluctant students and try to begin motivating them. They meet with the students once a month to discuss their work evaluations and they also meet with the campus coordinators and the job site supervisors. The Rehabilitation Counselors assist in referring 11th and 12th graders to the Community Coordinator when they are ready for on-the-job training in the community. They will also continue to follow a student if he/she is not placed upon graduation.

Their placement within the school system is viewed as critical by the Rehabilitation Counselors. They are very accessible to students and, thus, are able to provide the large amounts of counseling required. They are also able to play a public relations role by explaining the program and promoting it with special education teachers and other school personnel.

The Rehabilitation Counselors are assisted in their work by an Office Technician who handles the large amount of paperwork involved in operating the program. The Office Technician processes the applications from the campus coordinators, gathers eligibility information where necessary, and handles time sheets and accounting work for students in work experience. The assistance of the Office Technician greatly enhances the efficiency of the program.

The Community Coordinator is responsible for placement of students who are ready to begin on-the-job training in the community. The Community Coordinator meets with members of the business community, provides information on the program and encourages them to accept students for on-the-job training. The School District agrees to provide workers compensation and the employer agrees to provide supervision and keep track of worker hours. The Community Coordinator assesses the maturity and motivation of students and refers only those who are job ready. The Campus Coordinator also gathers information from teachers on how best to work with individual students and passes this information

on to job supervisors. The Community Coordinator is described by other program staff as an energetic and persuasive promoter of the program. Due to his efforts, over 80 different employers participate in on-the-job training. He also works with students and supervisors to iron out any problems which arise during the course of the placement.

The Community Coordinator has also fostered a good working relationship with the SCROC staff. They may provide him with leads on companies which may be willing to accept student trainees. They view the on-the-job training program as an important resource because it can provide a foot in the door for students who do not have sufficient skills to be placed by a SCROC instructor.

The relationship between the Torrance schools and the SCROC is facilitated by the fact that Torrance employs a SCROC Tutor. The tutor assists Torrance special needs students in the SCROC program and also serves as a liaison with School District personnel. When students enter the SCROC program, the tutor provides specific information on their special needs to the SCROC instructors and also provides support to the instructors in working with the students. The tutor goes into the classroom to see if students are having any problems and then provides special assistance in the classroom or in her office.

The tutor divides her time between the SCROC and the high school. She reports back to the Rehabilitation Counselors and the Community Coordinator on how students are progressing in their SCROC classes. They, in turn, provide input on programming based on their counseling of students. As a result of this sharing, special needs students' chances of succeeding in the SCROC program are improved and their drop-out rate has been significantly lowered.

Students who are nearing the end of their SCROC or other vocational training and who have participated in work experience through the Cooperative School Program receive training in job seeking skills from the program's VR Assistant (Instructional Aide). The VR Assistant works with job-ready seniors to assist them in locating permanent employment in the community. She gathers information from SCROC, other vocational training, work placements, etc., and assists students in preparing a resume. She familiarizes them with want ads, employment agencies, and other job information sources. She also works on filling out application forms, phone techniques and interview skills.

Training

The Cooperative School Program has long been recognized in the state of California as a model program and various school districts around the state have expressed an interest in learning more about it. As a result, program staff members have done several workshops covering the various components of the program. A package of explanatory materials has also been prepared for

dissemination at workshops and presentations. The areas covered include:

- program overview
- VR intake procedures
- vocational assessment
- special education curriculum
- regional occupational program
- vocational incentive training program
- placement assistance

Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

Vocational assessment is a critical component of the Cooperative School Program, and Torrance employs a sophisticated system which has been developed over a long period of time. Torrance originally contracted with local workshops for vocational evaluations. However, because of the belief that vocational evaluations are critical in giving students direction and in helping them to set career goals, the School District decided to develop its own assessment center. The assessment center was originally funded primarily with VEA dollars. It is now run with a combination of VEA and 94-142 funds. The schools pay for assessments for individual students.

The Vocational Assessment Center is staffed by a Vocational Assessment Center Evaluator and a Vocational Assessment Aide. They evaluate all of the students who participate in the Cooperative School Program. The evaluators visit each high school campus for three days of testing. Students come in for one hour at a time and miss no more than one class per day. The evaluators use the on-campus time to do paper and pencil testing which accords with the students' usual school activities.*

The evaluators also receive a packet of referral information from the high school teachers. If needed, they have access to any existing assessments and current IEP's. The evaluators avoid duplication of effort by making use of any information already collected by the schools; e.g., psychological, medical, and achievement histories.

After their on-campus testing students come to the Vocational Assessment Center for a one-day skills assessment. The evaluators watch for the students' functioning ability in a work

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*The evaluators have also found that this division of activities helps students leave negative feelings about academics behind when they come to the Vocational Assessment Center.

setting. A modified VALPAR is used. The evaluators have found that students generally enjoy the skill testing.

Within ten days of the skill testing, the evaluators prepare a vocational assessment report which is sent to the school and to the Department of Rehabilitation. The results are used in several ways. School personnel make use of them in IEP preparation. They are also used to guide SCROC placement. The Community Coordinator reviews the results in the process of considering students for on-the-job training. The Rehabilitation Counselors go over the results with students and use them as a basis for vocational counseling.

If desired, the evaluators at the Vocational Assessment Center can perform specialized types of assessments. They can screen for vision and hearing impairments. They can evaluate how a student handles money (information which would be useful for placement in a fast food operation). The Vocational Assessment Center evaluates approximately 200 students per year. It is also vendorized for adult DR clients who are served at times when the Center is not actively used by students.

Vocational goals for a student's IEP are developed in 10th grade, and the vocational assessment results are used in their development. As a rule, the Rehabilitation Counselors attend IEP meetings only for students with particularly difficult problems. In most cases, the campus coordinators provide vocational input in IEP meetings.

Torrance uses a multi-page standardized IEP format which is evaluated yearly and is regularly updated and revised. The IEP contains a separate section relating to prevocational/vocational issues. The Special Education Department has also prepared prevocational/vocational skills checklists which can be used in conjunction with the IEP. The Special Education Department employs a Program Specialist who is responsible for overseeing development of forms used in the IEP process. She serves as a liaison to the Cooperative School Program and attends the monthly meetings. She ensures that any forms and procedures developed integrate the various components of the Cooperative School Program.

The IWRP is prepared by the Rehabilitation Counselors during the summer before 10th grade or during the 10th grade school year. The IWRP references any vocational services provided by the school system including vocational evaluation, attendance at SCROC, and participation in work experience.

The Department of Rehabilitation and the Torrance Unified School District considered the development of a combined IEP/IWRP. Potential advantages listed were "insured continuity of planning, closer communication between DR and Education, and a clearer direction for the client/student". Representatives of DR and the school system met to develop a draft form but eventually abandoned the attempt. The group determined that the cost in

terms of changing procedures and schedules and the need for extra manpower would not justify a combined form. Moreover, the group felt that they were already receiving the benefits listed above by virtue of their current extensive cooperation. They concluded that when Rehabilitation and Education are already cooperating successfully the need for a combined form is simply not present.

Programming

As mentioned at the outset of this report, the Torrance program is notable for the continuum of service provided to its students. Students have their first contact with the program as early as 9th grade and are eligible for a broad range of services until graduation (and, in the case of DR, beyond graduation).

The Campus Coordinators contact students during the second semester of 9th grade, after they have made the adjustment to high school life. After they have identified interested youngsters, they send letters to their parents, along with a program brochure and an application to become a DR client. The Campus Coordinators try to have students accepted as clients and brought into the program by the beginning of 10th grade.

In the 10th grade students undergo a comprehensive vocational evaluation (see Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development, above). They also receive vocational counseling from the Campus Coordinators and the Rehabilitation Counselors. They are encouraged, with the assistance of their parents and their teachers, to set career goals for the next three years. They are also encouraged to take career orientation classes. They receive information about the offerings at the Southern California Regional Occupational Center (SCROC) and they are encouraged to begin the application process. Interested students are also brought on tours of SCROC.

Tenth grade students who are ready to work are placed in job sites on-campus or within the district which provide a very sheltered work environment. For example, they may perform custodial work, they may work in the nursery program, or they may assist in elementary school programs. The students are very closely monitored by the Campus Coordinators who work on such issues as attitudes and job readiness.

When students begin to work they are paid an incentive wage, provided by the Department of Rehabilitation. As they progress in the program, their wage increases based on their performance. The incentive wage is felt to be a critical element of the Cooperative School Program. The incentive wage makes the program attractive to students and they are anxious to participate based on its word-of-mouth reputation. The incentive wage also makes the program attractive to employers who might otherwise be hesitant to provide on-the-job training to students.

In the 11th grade students can attend SCROC which has approximately 45 different offerings. Examples of courses

special needs students have participated in include:

- retail grocery
- hospital occupations
- auto tune-up
- welding
- commercial remodeling
- hotel/motel
- electronics
- cosmetology

Torrance currently has 60-65 special needs students at SCROC, a large increase over previous years. They are assisted by the SCROC Vocational Student Tutor who serves as a liaison between the vocational program and the academic program. The SCROC Tutor assists students during or after class and also serves as a resource to SCROC instructors on meeting student needs. The SCROC program is open-entry, open-exit. Students are trained in a sequence of skills and receive a certificate relating to the skills they have attained. The SCROC certificate is recognized in the community as an indication of competence in the skill areas listed and greatly enhances a student's ability to obtain employment.

After students have participated in on-campus work experience and have begun SCROC training, they are generally ready to test their skills in the community. At this point (in 11th or 12th grade) the Campus Coordinators refer students to the Community Coordinator. The Community Coordinator reviews the student's case records and vocational evaluation report. He contacts the student's family and checks in with the SCROC instructors. He then meets with the student to develop a placement plan.

The Community Coordinator carefully assesses the motivation and maturity of the students. He refers only students who are clearly job-ready to employers. This approach is seen as critical in maintaining the credibility of the program.

The Community Coordinator tries to place students according to their interests and abilities and in relation to their SCROC training. He works with students to analyze the various options available, to determine the hours they are available, and to decide on methods of transportation. Students then choose from among three to four possible jobs and the Community Coordinator then arranges for an interview.

After the interview the employer decides whether to accept the student for incentive training (they are accepted in 90% of the

cases). Students work three to four hours per day, generally in the afternoon. Some work during school hours, while others work after school. They are paid once a month and can make as much as $200, depending on their incentive wage level. The students are monitored by the Campus Coordinators who require students to sign a contract and live up to it. The Campus Coordinators visit each site once or twice a month. They collect time sheets and employer evaluation sheets. They also obtain quarterly reports on student performance.

The Community Coordinator also continues to work closely with employers. At the outset of a placement, he speaks very frankly to the job supervisor, explaining a student's special needs and noting where problems might occur. He also provides information from special education teachers on how best to work with the student. He lays out the student's strengths and weaknesses and continues to work with them on weaknesses.

The Community Coordinator has had success in placing students in both small businesses and large companies. He has found that smaller companies are glad to get help in tight economic times and that they view student assistance as a saving to them. There is also less red tape involved in placement in smaller companies. On the other hand, large companies often have affirmative action officers who are interested in working with the program. They may also have an adopt-a-school program. Large companies will often enter the program as a community service.

Students have been placed in a wide variety of settings including hospitals, city agencies, car dealers, gas stations, Goodyear Tire, and the airport. One student was even placed as a deckhand on a fishing boat. The program staff move students along to new positions as they progress. For example, a student who expressed an interest in working with animals was initially placed in a pet store. The student moved on to work in a kennel and will now be placed as a veterinary assistant in an animal hospital.

In many instances students who have had virtually no success in school now have a chance to show that they are capable. For example, a student who was hyperactive in school was placed as a patient transporter in a local hospital. His gregariousness was appropriately channeled and he has done very well in the work setting. Another student who was very difficult in school was placed in a "plum" automotive job. He has done so well that he will probably be hired by his employer. (Although employers have no obligation to hire trainees, in many instances they do so. Some students who start in the program early are hired by employers while still in school, allowing program staff to concentrate on students with greater problems.)

Throughout the course of their placements students receive a great deal of support from the Campus Coordinators, the Rehabilitation Counselors, and the Community Coordinator. All trainees participate in weekly counseling sessions during which they receive feedback on how they are doing and suggestions on

how to get along. They discuss the advantages and disadvantages of different types of jobs and they also have an opportunity to share their experiences. Some high schools focus on individual counseling while others feature group sessions. The program staff have noticed that in senior year most students undergo a substantial change in attitude. They start to take their vocational training more seriously. They begin to make plans and decisions on their own and to seek additional training. All seniors also receive training in job-seeking skills. (See description of VR Assistant, above in Administration/Structure.) Most permanent placements occur in senior year. Many students are hired by their OJT employers and a significant number of others obtain new jobs in the community upon graduation. The Department of Rehabilitation continues to follow those students who are not placed upon graduation and will not close a case until they are sure the client is in a solid placement.

Torrance continues to expand vocational programming opportunities for its students. The School District has received a $26,000 JTPA grant to provide training for students who have been certified as clients but are not yet receiving services. The School District has also received $15,000 for summer programming. High school staff members are reaching out to middle schools to get them involved in vocational preparation. For example, they have asked the middle schools to work with students on getting Social Security cards. All efforts toward vocational programming are enhanced by Torrance's strong career education orientation and by the fact that career concepts have been infused into the curriculum.

Conclusion

The Cooperative School Program is characterized by a strong commitment on the part of vocational rehabilitation, vocational education, and special education. It offers students an unusually complete array of services beginning early in their high school experience. Because of this early intervention and the large amount of training and support received, students have been very successful in obtaining employment after graduation. The Cooperative School Program is particularly noteworthy for the strong partnership between Rehabilitation and Education, for the extensive involvement of vocational education, and for the comprehensiveness of its work experience program.

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COOPERATIVE SCHOOL/REHABILITATION

WORK-STUDY PROGRAM

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

SITE VISIT: DECEMBER 15 - 19, 1983

Background

The primary focus of Oklahoma's interagency effort is the Cooperative School/Rehabilitation Work-Study Program. The program represents a close working relationship between the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Special Education Section; the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitative and Visual Services; and local education agencies. The Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education has been involved with the summer portion of the cooperative work-study program. Even though the Department of Vocational and Technical Education is not part of the formal agreement/contract with the local school districts, it is a critical part of the state level interagency agreement.

Oklahoma has two major cities, Oklahoma City with a population of approximately 600,000 and Tulsa with a population of approximately 470,000. Both cities are expanding rapidly in response to the attraction of existing in the sunbelt. The rest of Oklahoma is sparsely populated, subsisting on farming and cattle ranching.

The energy industry has always been Oklahoma's economic mainstay. Oil has also created a boom and bust economy. Presently, Oklahoma's oil industry is depressed, a situation which has affected state revenues and caused substantial budget reductions in state programs. A strong state level commitment to the cooperative work-study program ensures that the program will continue and probably expand, regardless of budget cutbacks.

Planning

The beginning of Oklahoma's interagency effort can be traced to March, 1961 when a pilot work-study program was launched at Central High School in Oklahoma City. The impetus for the development of the program resulted from vocational rehabilitation's realization that mentally retarded youth were not being properly served by either the schools or vocational rehabilitation. VR services were limited because these youth, who had often dropped out of school, were being picked up too late for VR to successfully impact vocational skill development leading to job placement. The federally funded research and demonstration program at Central High School was started to combat this problem. Forty mentally retarded students were

enrolled in the program. The program's success caused the concept to spread and develop into a formal system which operates in sixty high schools across the state.

Oklahoma's state level interagency agreement between the Division of Rehabilitative and Visual Services of the Department of Human Services, the State Department of Education, Special Education Section, and the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education was developed in 1978-1979 and modified in 1982. The decision to develop an agreement resulted from a perceived need to clarify roles and responsibilities in order to eliminate confusion at the local level. The identification of resources within the agreement has especially benefitted high school principals. The role and support of the high school principal is critical to the success of the work-study cooperative program.

The Interagency Agreement specifies that a representative from each of the three agencies serve as a working member of the Oklahoma Inter-Agency Vocational Planning Group. Additional pertinent elements include: the provision by special education of career awareness, career exploration, job seeking and retention skill development activities and work-study; the recommendation that a vocational education representative act as a member of the IEP planning team if vocational education goals are to be included; the delegation of the VR counselor serving the local school district to act as a representative member of the IEP planning team if rehabilitative services are to be recommended; and the development of collaborative IEP's and IWRP's at the earliest time appropriate to each eligible individual.

Overview of State Cooperative Efforts

The purpose of the Cooperative Work-Study program is to provide a cooperative plan of coordinated services to handicapped youth within a school setting. Handicapped students selected for participation in the cooperative program are both special education students and eligible for vocational rehabilitation services according to state and federal guidelines. The cooperative program student attends special education classes for part of the day and then for the remainder of the day receives academic credit for participating in vocational training, on-the job training (OJT) or work experience. Most employed students receive a salary from their employer except those students in OJT at a school setting. For these students VR pays an OJT fee.

Each participating school district in the cooperative program hires a certified teacher as a teacher coordinator. She/he has dual responsibilities between special education and vocational rehabilitation. A portion of the day is reserved for teaching special education classes, which include both academic and vocational programming, while the remainder of the day is focussed on job development and placement, supervising students on the job, making home visits and providing vocational evaluations for planning purposes. The job related portion of

the day is under the supervision of vocational rehabilitation. Depending on the size of the high school, several teacher coordinators may be hired to participate in the program. Primarily, students with the following handicapping conditions are eligible for the program: educable mentally handicapped, learning disabled, educable mentally handicapped and learning disabled combined, emotionally disturbed, deaf and hearing impaired, multi-handicapped and trainable mentally handicapped.

A vocational rehabilitation counselor is assigned to each of the work-study programs. The teacher coordinator and VR counselor work as a team to provide comprehensive services for the handicapped student. Areas of cooperation include: IEP and IWRP development, vocational counseling, job development for work-study, vocational assessment and employer follow-up and support. The degree to which the two individuals work together varies according to program site. The handicapped population in some high schools is large enough to justify housing the VR counselor within the school. Some VR counselors divide their time between two or more schools and some VR counselors maintain an additional adult/client caseload.

Another important function of the cooperative program is the identification of handicapped students enrolled in high school who are not part of the work-study phase of the program but who may be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. These youth are called "Co-op other" students. The cooperative program acts as an excellent vehicle for orienting school personnel and parents about the services available through vocational rehabilitation.

The "Agreement for the Cooperative School/Rehabilitation Work-Study Program" is a formal document which details the roles, responsibilities and funding obligations of the participating agencies. The salary for the teacher coordinator is paid by the LEA from local school funds or state funds provided by the Special Education Section of the State Department of Education. The salary covering the portion of the teacher coordinator's time assigned to the provision of VR services can be considered for federal match. In order to use such expenditures for matching purposes, no federal funds can be utilized for the teacher's salary and these funds can not be used for any other matching purposes. The Division of Rehabilitative and Visual Services will reimburse teacher coordinators for travel incurred during the portion of the day assigned to vocational rehabilitation. The Division also agrees to assign a VR Counselor to the school and pay for secretarial support.

The level of involvement of the vocational technical schools in the cooperative program varies significantly according to communities. Some vocational technical schools are more flexible than others about training handicapped students. The teacher coordinator and VR counselor work together to place students/clients in vocational training if they feel the student is ready and will benefit from skill training. The teacher

coordinator will continue to monitor the students' placement in a vocational technical school.

A yearly evaluation of the Cooperative Work-Study Program is conducted to assess the program's effectiveness and to keep services current. The review teams are composed of vocational rehabilitation, special education and local school personnel. During FY 1983 sixty schools operated work-study programs. There were eighty-eight teacher coordinators and thirty-six VR counselors involved in the overall program. Thirty-one of the sixty schools were evaluated during FY 1983. The thirty-one programs reviewed had 1,075 students enrolled. It is estimated that 2,025 students were served in all sixty programs. In addition to these work-study students, there were approximately 570 other handicapped students served by the VR counselors in all the programs. Also, approximately, 1,442 graduates from the participating high schools continued to receive post high school services during FY 1983.

Not only was FY 1983 evaluated, but the statistics and accomplishments of the previous year were reviewed. During FY 1982 approximately 615 handicapped clients were rehabilitated and their cases closed. The records also indicate that the work-study students earned approximately 1-1/2 million dollars during FY 1982.

The obvious service need that is addressed by the cooperative program encourages the program's expansion, but the growth of the program is also due to state level commitment. The State Director of Special Education, the Assistant Director for Rehabilitative and Visual Services, and the Program Assistant Administrator for Rehabilitative Services all worked together on the first cooperative work-study program in Central High School. This close working relationship fostered a feeling of loyalty to the program's concept which has endured. Oklahoma is unique because decisions concerning the future of the cooperative program rest with people who have a historical perspective on the program as well as years of experience in working cooperatively.

The results of this cooperation are evident in other interagency efforts related to the cooperative program. In 1970 a summer program was initiated to help the work-study students bridge the gap between the regular school terms as well as between the classroom and the job. Teacher coordinators were hired as teaching consultants to continue working with the VR counselors to make home visits, schedule medical and psychological appointments for incoming students, visit students and employers on the job, make new job contacts and job placements, and counsel both students and parents.

The Department of Vocational and Technical Education totally funded the summer program until 1978. After 1978, the Division of Rehabilitative and Visual Services and the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education equally shared the costs for the teaching consultants' salaries and travel expenses. The Division also sponsored a two-day workshop to disseminate new

information concerning the needs of special education students and to exchange ideas and information between VR counselors and teacher coordinators throughout the state. In 1981 the State Department of Education, Special Education Section started providing the funding for the summer workshop.

Statistics for the 1982 summer program indicate that sixty-nine teaching consultants made 602 job placements, 957 job follow-up visits, 1,248 employer contacts, 2,041 counseling sessions with clients and 1,819 counseling sessions with parents. The major benefit derived from the summer program is that many handicapped youth are prevented from dropping-out of school. The summer program also allows the teacher coordinators more time to prepare vocational education programming for their students. Unfortunately, except for the summer workshop, the summer program did not occur during 1983. The Department of Vocational and Technical Education was unable to provide funding due to expansion of programming for handicapped students in vocational technical schools. The loss of the summer program has been strongly felt by all concerned parties and efforts are underway at the state level to find a new way to fund the summer program.

The Department of Vocational and Technical Education has also been involved in the formation of the Vocational Evaluation Centers. VR secured the buildings and renovated them for the purpose of conducting vocational evaluations. Vocational and Technical Education provided all the equipment for the centers, a contribution which amounted to over a half million dollars. If it is felt to be necessary to assess a student's vocational potential, then VR will pay for the student to attend a Vocational Evaluation Center. The results are used to determine vocational programming needs.

Oklahoma City

The Oklahoma City area has the greatest concentration of high schools participating in the work-study cooperative program. Because the first work-study program started in Oklahoma City, the program concept spread to other schools in the area. As a result, the program has become a well established method for providing vocational programming to special needs students. The existence of the organization, the Central Oklahoma Association of Teacher Coordinators (COATC), indicates the acceptance of and commitment to the cooperative program in the Oklahoma City area. The COATC holds monthly meetings to exchange ideas and information and share problems and concerns.

Moore

The town of Moore is a middle to upper income community located near Oklahoma City. Moore High School consists of juniors and seniors totaling approximately 1,834 students. Moore High School students can attend the Moore-Norman Area Vocational Technical School (MNAVTS) in order to receive vocational training. MNAVTS serves both youth and adults by providing both day and night

classes. High school students attend MNAVTS for part of the day and their home school for part of the day. MNAVTS has an open entry, open exit competency based program with twenty-eight different vocational offerings. Students receive certificates for different levels of accomplishment which are matched with actual job possibilities. For all graduating students the school conducts a one year follow-up to provide support.

Administration/Structure

The success of the cooperative work-study program in a high school depends on the school administration's support and the realization of the need for vocational programming for students with disabilities. This support is valued by the teacher coordinators and VR Counselor at the Moore High School. There are four teacher coordinators, two for students with learning disabilities (LD), one for the educable mentally handicapped (EMH) students, and one for deaf students and emotionally disturbed (ED) students. The teacher coordinators teach special needs classes in the morning then schedule one hour for planning and two hours for field time. Field time involves: securing jobs, making home visits, record keeping, developing curriculum, and conducting site visits to the students' job placements.

One VR Counselor is assigned to Moore High School and works closely with the four teacher coordinators. He has an office in the school building and is in the school three days a week. The VR Counselor provides mostly guidance and counseling concerning students' job potentials and vocational goals.

Several Moore High School work-study students attend MNAVTS part-time, return to the High School for academics and then continue to a work-study placement. The more flexible the school schedule the more successful the program. MNAVTS' open entry, open exit competency based program provides needed flexibility for serving students with disabilities. The teacher coordinator will monitor the student's progress at MNAVTS. In addition, MNAVTS funds a Placement Officer whose responsibilities also include job placement for MNAVTS' handicapped students. This person works closely with the VR Counselor to coordinate job placement activities.

Programming

The work experience (WE) placement for the students participating in the cooperative program provides the focus for vocational programming. Students attend class for part of the day and then work for the remainder of the day. Between twenty and forty hours per week is spent in work experience. Most students receive a salary from their employer except those in OJT at the school; for these students VR pays an OJT fee. CETA monies have been used in the past for summer work experience. Types of WE placements include: grocery store packing, food service, custodial, seat cover upholstery, car maintenance, gun repair, receptionist, office assistant and laborer for a construction

company. Attempts are made to match students' interests with their job placement. Students receive credit for their work experience. Grades are mostly determined by employer evaluations which are obtained then assessed by the teacher coordinator.

The teacher coordinators are responsible for most of the job placement activities, however, the VR Counselor will share job leads and assist with vocational counseling. The work-study students receive career awareness, job seeking and job retention skill training through the academic classes taught by the teacher coordinators.

The VR Counselor assists the teacher coordinator with pre-enrollment of mid-high school students into the cooperative program. The VR Counselor meets with parents and receives test scores of incoming juniors from the school psychologist in order to pre-screen for VR eligibility and the work-study program. In addition, the teacher coordinators, with support from the VR Counselor, present to the mid-high school an introductory slide show of the work-study program. A form is sent home to the parents to enroll the students in the program.

MNAVTS is very open to working with handicapped students. The competency-based curriculum allows students to work at their own pace and ability level. Most handicapped students attending MNAVTS are mainstreamed into the regular classrooms. However, there is a separate program in grounds and maintenance for some educable mentally handicapped students. A custodial maintenance program is being developed for the trainable mentally handicapped student.

During the 1983-84 school year, seven mentally retarded students and twenty-three learning disabled/emotionally disturbed students participated in the work-study program and also attend MNAVTS. The students at the work-study sites are supervised by vocational school personnel. The teacher coordinators at Moore High School are responsible for coordinating and conferring with these vocational school personnel.

MNAVTS also offers a special program for hearing impaired students. Some of the students are in high school while others have previously graduated. Those students still in high school attend the home school for academics and then attend MNAVTS for three hours of classes in the afternoon. Overall funding for the program is divided between VR and Vocational and Technical Education. The school district contributes 10% of the total funding costs for the program as an in-district obligation.

The hearing impaired students may choose any of the 28 courses offered at MNAVTS. They also receive a life skills seminar twice per month providing training in independent living skills, job seeking and retention skills, auto safety and credit issues. All students are VR clients. VR will provide an audiogram, vocational and physical evaluations and sometimes will cover expenses for books, supplies, hearing aids and glasses. Most of

the hearing impaired students attend vocational school in lieu of work experience. Coordination between the local high school and MNAVTS is the responsibility of the deaf education teachers at both schools. The home school is also responsible for coordination with the VR Counselor.

Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

The VR Counselor and the teacher coordinators at Moore High School closely coordinate vocational assessment and IEP/IWRP development. VR will pay for each student to receive a physical and psychological examination if necessary. VR will also fund vocational evaluations at the Vocational Evaluation Center. Because the evaluation is lengthy, it presents scheduling problems for high school students. Therefore, vocational evaluations are only recommended if necessary or if the parent requests an evaluation. Many physically handicapped students and some EMH, LD and hearing impaired students are sent to the Evaluation Center, otherwise, teacher coordinators conduct an interest inventory to assess vocational aptitudes.

The IEP will contain a general vocational objective specifying participation in the work-study program. Any other vocational objectives reflected in the IEP are based on the interest inventory and the teacher coordinator's experience with the student. The VR Counselor will participate in IEP meetings if requested, and if necessary will explain the work-study program and other VR services. The IWRP will reflect the vocational objectives listed in the IEP.

If a student attends MNAVTS, then participation in vocational and technical training is stated in the IEP. MNAVTS receives all IEP's. Vocational teachers will develop an addendum to the IEP which lists vocational objectives for vocational and technical training at MNAVTS.

Putnam City North High School

Putnam City is a rapidly growing upper middle class community located in northwest Oklahoma City. Putnam City North High School is one of three high schools in the Putnam City Independent School District. Enrollment for each high school is approximately 1,300 students. All physically handicapped students attend Putnam City North High School because the school building is one level and totally accessible.

Planning

The Putnam City North High School opened for classes the fall of 1978. The cooperative work-study program has been offered since the schools' inception. The program was well established in the other high schools so that it was taken for granted that the program would be offered in the new school. VR was contacted and a VR Couselor was assigned to the high school.

Administration/Structure

There are two teacher coordinators assigned to the work-study program, one for the EMH students and one for the LD students. Students are eligible for WE placement in the tenth grade. Similar to other work-study programs, the teacher coordinators teach classes for part of the day and then work for VR for the remainder of the day. The VR Counselor has an office in the high school and works closely with the two teacher coordinators, providing similar services as the VR Counselor assigned to Moore High School.

A new vocational technical school serves the district. The school provides a modular program and is moving into the high technology area. Emphasis is on recruiting advanced students. As a result, the school is not oriented toward training special needs students. The administration at Putnam City North High School is aware of the situation and is working with the vocational school to foster awareness and a greater willingness to work with handicapped students. There are some LD students attending the school.

Programming

Putnam City North High School is a state leader in career education and one of the first schools to hire career education specialists. A career center is located in the library. Careers are emphasized in the individual disciplines and built into the curriculum. The career education emphasis is also reflected in the special education program. The teacher coordinators are responsible for teaching job seeking and retention skills and career awareness during the academic classes.

The teacher coordinator for the LD students monitors the students' progress in school and in the cooperative program. Most of the students are mainstreamed into regular classes and some attend the vocational technical school. The majority of the LD students conduct their own job search with assistance from the teacher coordinator. The teacher coordinator for the EMH and ED students finds the WE placements for the majority of her students. Also, she will often accompany her students to the job interviews. In contrast to the program for the LD students, there is more contact with employers in order that the teacher coordinator can provide needed support to both the students and employers.

The VR counselor provides guidance and counseling for both work-study and "coop other" students. He is responsible for coordinating with the Director of Special Education and supervising the teacher coordinators for the VR portion of the day. The VR Counselor provides or completes all the necessary physical, psychological or vocational testing for the students. He coordinates VR tests with the required educational tests.

Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

Each work-study student undergoes a short vocational evaluation which includes three to four tests developed and conducted by the VR Counselor. Results are utilized by both the teacher coordinators and the VR Counselor to guide vocational programming and to determine WE placement. The career plan which results is incorporated into the IEP. The VR Counselor will attend the IEP meetings. IWRP's are developed in conjunction with the IEP and both are up-dated annually. If necessary the VR Counselor will send a student to the Vocational Evaluation Center. This does not occur often because an extensive evaluation is not needed for educational purposes.

Tulsa

The basic components of the cooperative work-study program model remain the same for all programs throughout the state. In Tulsa County, as in the Oklahoma City area, the high school programs include teacher coordinators, VR Counselors assigned to schools, and work experience as the focal point for vocational programming. However, there are some differences in the Tulsa programs which reflect a philosophical debate concerning the degree to which vocational education should be provided in combination with academic programming.

There are seven high schools in Tulsa participating in the cooperative program. Each high school has only one teacher coordinator. Therefore, in comparison to several Oklahoma City area schools with several teacher coordinators, the Tulsa area teacher coordinators are responsible for working with a larger group of students. Students are eligible for a WE placement in the eleventh and twelfth grades. In some schools the teacher coordinator will work with the tenth grade students to prepare for work-study with the students in the eleventh grade. All VR counselors are housed in the central VR office and are assigned to one or two high schools.

East Central High School

East Central High School is located in a lower to middle income community in the northeast section of Tulsa. The high school has approximately 1,812 students and 170 special education students. The special education program consists of seven special education teachers, three teachers for EMH students and four teachers for LD students.

Administration/Structure

The VR Counselor assigned to East Central High School is also responsible for one other high school. He maintains mostly a student caseload. Because the VR Counselor is responsible for services after graduation, his small adult case load is primarily composed of past student/clients. The EMH students are eligible for participation in the work-study program. If an LD student

becomes a VR client, the teacher coordinator will find the student a WE placement, but will be unable to provide the academic support. The teacher coordinator spends part of the day on VR related services and also teaches two English classes for tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade EMH students, and one class preparing tenth grade EMH students for the work-study program.

Programming

The VR Counselor visits each of his assigned schools one-half day, two days a week. He will take applications of new students in the tenth grade. A rapport is developed between the school personnel, the VR Counselor and the work-study students. Most employer visits are conducted by the teacher coordinator, however, the VR Counselor will conduct visits if requested. Sometimes the VR Counselor will assist the teacher coordinator with home visits and job placement. Job leads are shared. The VR Counselor is available as a resource for vocational programming and will provide vocational counseling when necessary. The teacher coordinator will help determine the level of VR counselor involvement that is needed for each student.

The teacher coordinator is responsible for coordinating the academic programming with the vocational programming for students job-placed and students in East Central High School's vocational training courses, as well as for those few students placed in the Tulsa County Area Vocational Technical Schools. The vocational technical schools are somewhat resistant to working with handicapped students. If an EMH student attends the vocational technical school, then the teacher coordinator will monitor the student's progress and will work with the vocational school teacher, if possible.

Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

VR provides a five day vocational evaluation at the Vocational Evaluation Center for almost all the sophomores who will participate in the work-study program. In addition, the teacher coordinator conducts for each student a classroom assessment of vocational abilities, job related behavior and daily living skills. The resulting identification of vocational goals is reflected in the IEP.

The VR Counselor is responsible for coordinating the IEP and IWRP. He participates in the majority of IEP meetings and coordinates the medical and psychological reports. The IWRP reflects the vocational goals stated in the IEP.

Conclusion

Administrators and line staff involved in the cooperative work-study program were unanimous in their feelings about the benefits of the cooperative program. It provides needed service that

otherwise would be lacking. It has helped change curriculum to include vocational programming and it ensures follow-up services for handicapped students.

VR provides access to diagnostic data which enables school districts to more appropriately place students. The WE component of the program has facilitated community awareness and encouraged employers to work with disabled individuals. The teachers have also gained a greater appreciation of the world of work. Most importantly, the program prevents students from dropping out of school by providing an educational alternative to academic coursework.

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INTERAGENCY SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES FOR THE HANDICAPPED

STATE OF MICHIGAN

SITE VISIT: JANUARY 9 - 11, 1984

Background

The basis for Michigan's efforts toward occupational preparation of handicapped youth is a cooperative affiliation between vocational rehabilitation, special education, and vocational education. The three state agencies - the Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) (formerly the Bureau of Rehabilitation), the Vocational-Technical Education Service (V-TE), and the Special Education Services Area (SPED) - involved in the cooperation affiliation operate under the auspices of Michigan's Department of Education. This single locality has resulted in a shared philosophy and a firm commitment towards providing a quality continuum of educational-vocational services to special needs students through a joint state-wide effort. This commitment is evidenced by a comprehensive state agreement, allocation of resources, including both staff and funds, and a state-wide inservice training plan for educators and rehabilitation personnel.

Michigan consists of both highly-urban areas and large tracts of sparsely populated rural areas. To meet the diverse geographic needs, the state uses both local educational districts (LED) with a public board of education and intermediate school districts (ISD). The latter are established by state law for the purpose of providing free public education on a regional basis. Several LED's may be located within an ISD. Michigan has 57 ISD's in which there are 54 vocational education centers.

Vocational educational services are provided in two types of programs in Michigan. The vocational education centers (career centers) serve as the dominant locus of activity for many SPED students. The second type of vocational education is located within the SPED classroom at the secondary or "home school".

Planning

Michigan's Mandatory Special Education Act (P.A. 198) preceded the passage of the Education for all Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142), the Vocational Education Amendments (P.L. 94-482), and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-112). The state statute was unique in several respects and established the foundation for cooperative affiliation through specific mandates:

1. All special education (SPED) students may, if they and/or parents (guardians) so choose, remain in school through the school year of their 26th birthday, if deemed appropriate.

2. All students enrolled in a SPED curriculum leading to a high school diploma, must receive prevocational education, vocational education and personal adjustment training.

3. All SPED students must receive formal education in the least restrictive setting. No SPED student may be removed from the classroom for an entire school day. As such, vocational education, on-the-job training or work-study programs cannot be substituted for educational instruction.

4. Each SPED student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) must include specific vocational goals and objectives. Programmatically, if the student attends a skill center, this often results in the participation of the vocational education representative. The vocational rehabilitation counselor may also be present if appropriate.

The explicit statutory requirements encouraged the development of a comprehensive interagency system for the delivery of special educational and vocational services to SPED students. The law established an ambiance which lent credibility and legitimacy to the cooperative affiliation between the state agencies and within the local school districts.

A representative from each of the three agencies as well as a statewide project-training coordinator was assigned to design and implement the system, to develop the VR/SE/VE state agreement and associated documents, and to design and deliver a statewide training program. The state agreement which resulted is impressive in its comprehensiveness. In particular, the document clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities of each of the three agencies both at the state and local school levels. Financial obligations are spelled out as well as staff responsibilities. The state agreement is particularly sensitive to the need to provide quality education and vocational development to all SPED students while establishing a system which is responsive to the individual student. Collaborative programming, with the IEPC/IEP and the IWRP serving as the primary vehicles, is the means by which equality of opportunity and individualization are accomplished.

Equally impressive is the design and implementation of the statewide training program in the coordinated interagency VR/SE/VE services delivery system. The training is provided on a regional basis to administrators, educators, and counselors involved in special education, vocational education and vocational rehabilitation. The design of the training component allows for an explanation of the utility of the statewide agreement, development of local agreements, establishment of goals and a system of training evaluation, and modification.

While the state level agency representatives and the project coordinator are continuing to assist in the development and implementation of local interagency agreements,both time commitments and focus of activities are beginning to be modified. Three specific areas have been identified as priorities for 1983-1984.

1. Development of pre-vocational curricula which utilize a competency-based approach and which correlate both general education and career-specific education to SPED and vocational training. Once the pre-vocational curricula have been developed, eleven regional inservice sessions will be convened to insure the training of special and vocational educators.

2. Development of a coordinated job placement system for youth which will be incorporated into the interagency delivery system. Staff will conduct a national survey regarding cooperative job placement activities with emphasis on those programs which are directed to service provision for handicapped youth.

3. Continuation of the development of collaborative planning and programming between MRS and VTE to assist selected community colleges in their postsecondary special needs program for the handicapped. This program is designed to meet the needs of the disabled adult population who could benefit from college-level vocational education. State-level staff will be involved in on-site reviews, technical assistance, expansion and improvement of existing programs and in the implementation of collaborative programs at nine community colleges which do not yet offer such services.

Michigan is thus working towards stabilizing the interagency cooperative efforts while improving and broadening its scope. Working papers, such as annual statement of goals and objectives, as well as reports, document the evolution of this system.

Overview of Michigan's Coordinated System of SPED, V-TE, and VR

In the state of Michigan vocational education programming is the focal point of the coordinated system. As mentioned earlier, vocational education services may be provided in a career center or at the home school. The centers offer a variety of technical skill training which is generally compatible with the main industries/employment opportunities in the district (e.g., farm power and machinery repair in rural district schools). SPED students spend one-half day at the vocational education center and the remaining part of the day in SPED or regular education class. The career centers are available to SPED students to gain either regular vocational education or adapted vocational education. In both instances, instruction is provided by a certified VE teacher. Support services are provided by SE. Should the SPED student require supplemental assistance or environmental modification in order to succeed in the VE program, the VE program is adapted to meet the student's needs. VE set-

aside funds may be used to defray the additional costs incurred by the LED for the adaptations.

Within the home school the Special Education/Vocational Education (SE/VE) alternative is available. This alternative is for SPED students whose impairments are so severe that their vocational needscannot be met in the regular or adapted VE programs and/or whose expressed vocational choices are non-existent in the regular or adapted VE program. The SE/VE program is taught by SPED-approved educators.

A final alternative for vocational education is available to SPED students. The Individualized Vocational Training (IVT) program is specifically designed for those SPED students whose vocational interests and needs cannot be addressed in regular or adapted VE programs or SE/VE programs. The IVT program model allows the vocational training to be based in community sites. By legislative mandate, the SPED student must be assigned to an approved SPED instructor who is responsible for the development of the IEP. Due to the requirement that all work-study locations must be supervised by a SPED instructor, the IVT alternative is not employed to a great extent.

In accordance with federal requirements, Michigan allocates at least 10% of its total education funds to pay for 50% (maximum) of the costs associated with the vocational education of handicapped students. An additional 20% is allocated for the costs of vocational education of disadvantaged students.

Vocational rehabilitation becomes the primary agency for service provision to SPED students, who meet the eligibility requirements, following graduation. To assure a continuum of services, VR generally becomes involved with the SPED students prior to graduation. In the densely populated areas of the state, a VR counselor is directly assigned to the career center and home school(s). In the rural areas, the SPED students are part of the VR counselors' overall caseload.

While the local VR office is generally made aware by sophomore year of the number of SPED students who may be in future need of services, VR becomes actively involved when vocational placement occurs. Two exceptions may result in VR participation earlier if: 1) the student is planning to drop out and 2) if VR services are needed but are not mandated responsibilities of SPED (e.g., prosthetics). During senior year, VR counselors are invited to attend IEP meetings, to provide orientation to students and parents concerning VR services, and to begin eligibility assessment through associated evaluations. The VR counselors have access, with permission, to students' IEP's to use the information in the development of the IWRP. In some instances, VR funds have been available to SPED students for the purchase of prostheses or adaptive equipment (e.g., driver education).

Overall, VR plays an important advisory-consultant role in the development of vocational education goals for the SPED student.

VR has also established relations with other state and local agencies whose services may be of benefit to the SPED student (e.g., the local community mental health center, sheltered workshops, etc.). The postsecondary vocational education program, located at the community colleges, are a shared effort between VR and VE to insure that handicapped adults have access to vocational technical skills training beyond the secondary school system.

While Michigan's commitment is directed to the provision of quality educational and vocational services to SPED students, the state also recognizes the concrete benefits which accrue from the system. Michigan realizes financial gains in several areas.

For example:

- The institutional costs of maintaining handicapped students far exceed those incurred through the combined SPED, V-TE and VR expenditures (institutional costs equal almost $90,000/year/student).

- The involvement of MRS during secondary education has resulted in a steady rate of successful rehabilitation closures among the SPED population. Recidivism has also been low. As such, early intervention had led to the avoidance of higher costs in the long run.

Aside from the financial incentives, Michigan has identified several other benefits to interagency cooperation. Educational and vocational rehabilitation programs now compliment one another. Duplication of services, particularly between V-TE and MRS has been reduced, it not eliminated, resulting in an increased level of efficiency in both agencies. MRS is able to more effectively plan its services and to allocate its staff caseloads through early identification of eligible clients. Finally, the system has clear lines of accountability at each stage and for each level of personnel. Outcome can be easily traced through the successful endeavors of SPED students in their vocational placements.

Mecosta - Osceola Career Center

The Mecosta-Osceola Career Center is located in Big Rapids which is located in the central and rural part of the state. The Center provides vocational education services to five local school districts in a six county area. Administratively, the Center is operated through an intermediate school district. The facility was constructed in 1976 through federal, state, local and upper Great Lakes funds. The Career Center is completely accessible and has the ambiance of a small shopping mall. Enrollment capacity is for 450 students; approximately 400 students presently attend the Center with the decrease in enrollment due to the decline in the birthrate.

Planning

Although a formal agreement was developed on the local level, the rural environment encouraged the development of cooperative efforts by VR/VE/SE before the execution of the agreement. All agency/school representatives enthusiastically endorsed and utilized the services offered by each service area. The benefit of the local agreement as well as attendance at the state training was in the clear enunciation of roles, responsibilities and accountability. To a certain degree, the local agreement reinforced and formalized the manner in which services were already delivered. Overall, the VR/VE/SE components served to complement and supplement each other in the provision of a continuum of education and vocational preparation for special needs students in the Mecosta Osceola Intermediate School District.

Administration/Structure

The Career Center employs a Student Services Coordinator. This person serves as the primary linkage between the SPED student, the continuing SPED instruction and (later) the VR counselor. The Student Services Coordinator participates in the development and implementation of the student's IEP.

The home schools employ a SPED-certified Work Study Coordinator. This specialist spends one-half day each week at the Career Center to provide consultation to the VE staff. The Work Study Coordinator is also responsible for evaluation of SPED students and IEP development.

Programming

All interested students, both regular and SPED, are referred to the Career Center during their sophomore year. They visit the Center to directly observe the various course offerings and to meet instructors and staff. Brochures and program descriptions are given to the students for their own and their parents' review. Students begin their technical skill instruction in their junior year. Twelve technical skills training programs are available. Each course of study is taught by a certified VE instructor and a paraprofessional.

About 12% of the total student population (N = 1300) in this ISD are SPED students. Over 50% of these students receive their vocational education at the Career Center. All SPED students are integrated into the courses of study with adaptations made when necessary. The curriculum for each technical skill training areas is competency-based, allowing SPED students to achieve at their own rates according to their ability. SPED students spend half of each day at the Career Center. They return to their home school to receive their regular and/or SPED instruction. Academic curricula is often modified in order to complement the vocational course (e.g., math instruction focussed on drafting mathematics rather than geometry, etc.).

The St. Clair County Skill Center

The St. Clair County Skill Center is located in eastern Michigan in the city of Port Huron. The Skill Center is administered through the St. Clair Intermediate School District and provides vocational education to seven local school districts. The combined school districts in St. Clair County have a total school enrollment of 29,130 students. Almost 11% or 3,100 students receive special education services.

The Skill Center was built in 1975. The facility, which is totally accessible, has the capacity to enroll 1100 students. At present, there are 958 students receiving vocational education at the Skill Center, about 13% of whom are SPED students. Adults who have returned to school to fulfill GED requirements and/or for retraining, are also enrolled at this time.

Planning

While the St. Clair ISD encompasses both urban and rural areas, the staff of VR/VE/SPED were quite familiar with the needs of the student population as a whole and the ways in which the cooperative program could best provide educational and vocational opportunities. The formal agreement, which has served as the prototype for other localities, is valuable for its clear delineation of responsibilities and for its system of consistency and accountability. School and agency representatives are committed to cooperation with other agencies as well as documented by memberships on other agency boards (e.g., DMH, Mental Health Centers) and participation in the design, and implementation of a Model Life Services Pilot Project. The orientation is towards cooperation, resource sharing and accountability to provide a continuum of services.

Administration/Structure

The Skill Center has initiated a special needs project which is designed to serve the needs of both SPED and disadvantaged students. The Special Needs Project provides funds for: 1) paraprofessionals in most of the study programs, 2) counselor-coordinators who act as resource personnel to the students, and 3) remedial reading and math skills instructors whose salaries are partially paid through these funds. A Special Needs Advisory Committee oversees the project and is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the program, including recommendations regarding improvements in the program.

VRhas been extensively involved with vocational education and special education since 1968. A coordinator for the Youth Services Program works with the ISD of St. Clair County for planning and job development. A VR counselor has been assigned to the Skill Center and home schools. While VR is informed of the potential number of eligible students during their sophomore year, they become more actively involved during the senior year. VR representatives contact SPED students for prescreening.

Informational brochures are disseminated and a general orientation is held for both students and parents. The VR staff actively solicit family involvement to help insure success of the student's employment placement. A job-seeking clinic, sponsored by VR, is held in the spring for graduating students.

Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

Students are recruited in their sophomore year by counselors in the home schools to visit the Skill Center. They spend a day at the center, viewing a slide show, observing the actual training and meeting instructors. An open house is also held in the evening to allow parents to visit with the students. The SPED teachers and staff in the home schools are responsible for the vocational assessment, development of an IEP, and identification of any adaptations which are needed to accommodate the SPED student at the Skill Center.

SPED and VE assessments are available with permission, to VR staff for IWRP Coordination. Supplemental services offered by VR include medical evaluations, aptitude and interest inventories if school-based data is not complete, job seeking and job placement assistance. On occasion, VR purchases needed assessments from other agencies.

Programming

The diverse needs of the residents of this area, as well as a high unemployment rate, has provided stimulation for the development of eighteen courses of study. The Skill Center employs a job title approach to the development of curricula and instruction. Competency-based training is available for 130 DOT-approved job titles within the 18 courses of study.

Aside from the courses of study within the facility, the Skill Center has also developed on-the-job training and work stations in the community (e.g., a local hospital has been serving as a job clinic). These work station opportunities are available to the SPED students and are supervised by SPED-certified instructors.

In the fall of their junior year, students begin to attend the Skill Center. A complete orientation is presented and students spend the first six weeks in modules and doing research projects concerning the selection of a course study. This initial period allows all students to gain a more complete and realistic perception of the courses of study, the expectations within each content area, and future employment opportunities.

SPED students who do not attend the Skill Center receive prevocational, vocational education and personal adjustment training through SPED resources in the home schools. VR participates in job readiness assessment as well as in job placements following graduation.

SUMMARY

Michigan's statewide and local focus on cooperation between special education, vocational education and vocational rehabilitation is pervasive and all-encompassing. MRS has taken a leadership role in the development of cooperative agreements between the VR, VTE and SPED systems. While the vocational education career/skill centers serve as the primary delivery system, individualized career education is available for those for whom the centers are not the best alternative. The delivery system, as a whole, is cognizant of available community resources which can be tapped to insure that all SPED students receive appropriate pre-vocational and vocational skill training. The emphasis on post-graduation activities, in regards to either post-secondary training or job placement (successful rehabilitation closures) speaks to the success of this cooperative program.

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NORTH DAKOTA INTERAGENCY COOPERATIVE

AGREEMENT/FARGO, REGION 5

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

SITE VISIT: NOVEMBER 30 - DECEMBER 2, 1983

Background Information

North Dakota is a rural, sparsely-populated state with a total population of 652,695. Its economy is based primarily on agriculture with government and service industries providing most other employment opportunities. North Dakota's major programs relating to occupational preparation of handicapped youth are administered as follows:

Program	Administrative Agency
• Special Education	North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, Division of Special Education
• Vocational Education	State Board of Vocational Education
• Vocational Rehabilitation	North Dakota Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

There are thirty-two special education units and eight vocational rehabilitation regions across the state. (The boundaries of these entities do not always coincide.) Vocational education services are provided through high school-based programs in individudal school districts or through one of eight multi-district vocational education centers. In a few very rural sections of the state no vocational education services are available.

Planning

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation had a history of working with the schools that extended, in some instances, into the late 60's. The relationships were flexible, informal, and developed on an ad hoc basis. With the passage of P.L. 94-142 a need for more structure arose. Because P.L. 94-142 gave certain specific responsibilities to the schools, it was necessary to re-examine the implications of VR's "similar benefits" provisions. With more comprehensive services mandated, disagreements arose as to allocation of resources. The impetus to address these and similar issues was provided by federal efforts to encourage cooperation between education and vocational rehabilitation.

In 1977-78, the U.S. Commissioners of Education and Rehabilitation Services issued several joint memos relating to strategies for cooperation and encouraging the development of interagency agreements between special education, vocational education, and vocational rehabilitation. The Region 8 RSA office followed up with a meeting to discuss implementation within the region. The meeting was attended by a number of North Dakota representatives who became the core group for planning North Dakota's cooperative effort. The group included representatives of the three major state agencies as well as a state regional VR administrator and a private workshop provider. The Midwest Regional Resource Center (MRRC) at Drake University agreed to serve as a facilitator for the group.

The MRRC convened a series of meetings over the period of one year and assisted group members in developing a state-level interagency agreement. The group adopted the philosophy that the state-level agreement should be primarily a statement of understanding and that working agreements should be developed at the local level. As a result the state-level agreement included:

- a statement of mutual commitment to the provision of coordinated services
- a general description of roles and functions of state agencies
- an outline of the services each agency might provide
- an implementation plan with provisions for state and local steering committees and a state-wide training effort for local personnel

The Governor and the heads of the state agencies approved the agreement and signed it on March 25, 1980. In addition, the agency heads each appointed a representative to the state-level Interagency Steering Committee. The appointment of this committee was considered critical in maintaining the effort. Responsibility for chairing the committee rotates yearly.

The MRRC prepared a detailed training package for use in the eight regions of the state. The MRRC also conducted a "Train-the-trainers" session for state-level people and one region of the state. The state-level people then conducted the training sessions in the other seven regions. Afterward, the regions were asked to form committees and develop local agreements. This process took approximately one year. All but one region were successful in developing acceptable agreements and several developed particularly comprehensive documents. One such region, Fargo, Region-V, will be discussed in greater detail below. The Local Interagency Committees, like the state-level committee, include a representative from special education, from vocational education, and from vocational rehabilitation. They also rotate their chairperson so that responsibility always rests with the same agency at the state and local level.

Overview of State Cooperative Efforts

Throughout the state of North Dakota, the school system is the focal point of the cooperative efforts. The schools identify students and provide necessary training programs. VR supplements school efforts. Counselors are assigned to school caseloads and receive most referrals one year prior to graduation. The primary role for VR is the continuation of service after high school. The counselor gets to know the students, gets involved in Individual Education Plans, and makes sure that services get carried through after school.

North Dakota does not allocate any particular funding for cooperative efforts, but, rather, expects local areas to incorporate cooperative practices into their general methods of operation. The benefit for local areas is that everyone's money goes further and the student is better served in making the transition from school to work.

A number of school districts and VR offices were cooperating even before the introduction of the state interagency agreement and the state training program. For these people, the state training provided the impetus for getting some informal understandings into writing. In other areas the state training was the primary mechanism for bringing people together. The process of putting together an agreement was their introduction to working cooperatively. Thus, the training was helpful in equalizing circumstances across the state.

The state-level Interagency Steering Committee recently went through a period of inactivity which was reflected in some of the regions. Because the state interagency agreement does not specify meeting times or detailed monitoring activities for the Steering Committee, some people feel that it is weak on maintenance of the effort. The agreement does, however, mandate an annual review of interagency efforts and the Steering Committee has sent out a questionnaire to analyze local cooperative agreements.

A number of persons interviewed attributed the success of North Dakota's efforts to the fact that it is a small state in terms of population. People in government often know each other personally and know what contacts to make to accomplish change. There is also an important trust factor present. The participants in North Dakota's efforts have shown an unusual degree of flexibility and, wherever possible, interpret rules and regulations in a non-restrictive way. The development of cooperative agreements is seen as part of an evolutionary process toward provision of better services.

North Dakota's interagency efforts have not resolved all of the state's problems in preparing handicapped students for work. Career education is not provided on a consistent basis. Students may not receive job-seeking information, job-keeping information, etc. Vocational evaluation of special education students has

also been identified as an area needing additional attention. Moreover, the range of vocational offerings available varies greatly for both handicapped and non-handicapped students. Nevertheless, North Dakota has developed a very workable system of interagency cooperation that makes best use of those resources which are available.

Fargo, Region V

The Fargo Region is the largest in the state in terms of population (132,394) and encompasses the state's largest city and major trade area. The Fargo Region has had a long history of cooperation between VR and the schools and, as a result, its cooperative relationships are among the most sophisticated in the state.

Planning

Prior to the passage of P.L. 94-142, the Fargo VR office routinely contacted the schools every spring and fall for case-finding purposes. The relationship was, however, somewhat one-sided. After P.L. 94-142 was in place, the schools became more sensitive to the needs of handicapped students and became more interested in resources for these students. The schools realized that they had a responsibility for what happened to students after graduation and they saw VR as having an important role in the transition from school to work. Thus, when a regional interagency committee was formed, most of the participants already knew each other.

The interagency committee identified a number of issues which had posed problems for local agencies. These included redundant testing, how and when to make referrals to VR, and access to post-secondary education. The committee established a smaller task force to study these issues further and to develop a draft interagency agreement. The intent of the group was that the agreement would serve as a working document and be used as a reference by practitioners.

The Region V Interagency Cooperative Agreement was developed during 1980-81 and was formally adopted on February 1, 1982. It describes coordination of agency services in the following areas:

- Find Activities
- Obtaining Consent for Referral
- Referral to Assessment
- Assessment
- Individualized Program Planning

- Program Services
- Architectural Barrier Removal

The agreement also provides for a six-month planning cycle, in-service training, and a grievance procedure. The agreement provides guidelines for IEP/IWRP coordination. It also recognizes Special Education and Vocational Education as the primary providers of program services in the secondary setting with VR becoming involved in special circumstances. VR is the primary provider upon completion of the secondary program. In addition, the agreement was amended during the past year to add a developmental disabilities component.

Administration/Structure

The focus of the interagency effort for policy and planning issues is the interagency committee. The critical relationship on a day-to-day basis, however, is that of the VR Counselor and the Vocational Resource Educator (VRE). The VRE is a member of the vocational education staff who is also trained in special education. The VRE serves as a liaison to special education and participates in all meetings for IEP's involving vocational programming. The VRE then works with vocational education teachers to assist them in providing the vocational programming specified in the IEP. The VRE orients the vocational education teacher to the special needs of students and also works individually with students.

The VRE is the primary link between the schools and VR. The Fargo VR office assigns counselors to work with the school population. The VRE is responsible for initiating VR involvement with individual students by making referrals and providing background information as needed. The VRE notifies the VR counselor about IEP meetings and other relevant staffings. Students are generally referred to VR during their junior year though earlier involvement is sought in more difficult cases. The VR counselor consults with school personnel on work-related issues, obtains necessary information on students, and plans for the student's transition from school. The VR counselor's main function is that of a resource person for long-range planning.

Training

The Region V Interagency Cooperative Agreement has been the major focus of local training efforts to date. During the first year of implementation, interagency committee members introduced the agreement to superintendents and principals within the region. This year the committee is working with line staff within the schools. The sessions cover the history of the agreement, backgrounnd informationn on VR services, and issues involved in school to work transition. The trainers also use the session to introduce the interagency agreement manual as a reference document.

Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

Vocational assessment is, at present, a weak area in vocational programming for Fargo students. An Evaluation and Training Center (ETC) with a broad capability and range of equipment for assessment has been established and functions as an arm of the school district. It is, however, VR-oriented and provides an extensive two-week vocational evaluation which is used primarily for adult VR clients. VR refers high school clients for this evaluation only when there is a serious question as to their skills and level of functioning.

The Fargo Special Education Department previously maintained an evaluator at the ETC to do short-term three-day evaluations for high school students. This position was eliminated due to funding constraints and, except in unusual circumstances, students do not undergo formal vocational evaluations. Special education teachers and VRE's use some assessment instruments on an informal basis and they will also be receiving in-service training on some additional assessments. There is general agreement that more work needs to be done in the area of vocational evaluation and school personnel are examining funding possibilities to expand their evaluation resources.

Special education teachers serve as case managers in the development of IEP's but, as mentioned earlier, VRE's are involved in all IEP's specifying vocational programming. The VRE and the special education teacher go over testing results and background information separately. They then meet to discuss what vocational courses might be appropriate and what modifications might be necessary. The VRE drafts the vocational segment of the IEP. In sample IEP's provided, a separate page is devoted to vocational issues. The student's present level of functioning in the vocational area is stated, followed by a general vocational goal. The goal is accompanied by several related objectives.

The VRE provides copies of the IEP to the VR counselor. In some instances, the VR counselor will have participated in the IEP meeting, providing consultation on work-related issues such as vocational skills. After receiving the IEP, the VR counselor prepares the IWRP which is usually a reflection or extension of the IEP. The IWRP is a one-page document which states a vocational objective in terms of a specific job area. The IWRP outlines the rehabilitation services to be provided, the dates of service, the expected results, the providers, and the estimated costs. The IWRP references any services being provided by the schools.

Programming

Fargo offers vocational courses in five general areas (distributive education, office, home economics, industrial, and agriculture) and special needs students have participataed in each area. The VRE facilitates the implementation of the

vocational programming specified in the IEP but the actual instruction is provided by the vocational education teacher. The VRE meets with the teacher to provide background information on special needs students and to arrange for any necessary modifications in the curriculum. The VRE's may rewrite tests, tape books, or revise instructional materials. Although the vocational curriculum is not totally competency-based, VRE's may contract with teachers to obtain credit for a student who may wish to complete a portion of a course. VRE's also have aides who can assist them in working individually with students.

VRE's have regular contact witih special education teachers beginning with the student's transition from eighth grade into high school. The VRE and the special education teacher continue to work together to insure that the student is in the appropriate classes, that the course content meets the student's needs, and that vocational and academic programming are integrated. Special education teachers are responsible for prevocational programming and help students to explore the world of work. They organize field trips and cover items such as social security cards, time cards, pay checks, bank accounts, etc. As students become more advanced, they learn to fill out application forms and undergo practice job interviews. A student-run Christmas Bazaar is part of the prevocational program in one of the Fargo high schools.

In addition to the prevocational offerings, students receive job-related information throughout their special education academic program. For example, in reading classes, students might go over want ads or names of tools. In math classes, students often work on banking skills, totaling menu prices, or figuring sales tax. (This type of vocational orientation is less common in the regular academic program and, as a result, student access to career-related information may vary with the amount of special education programming they are receiving).

One additional component of Fargo's vocational training is a work-experience program. The school board allocates a small sum of money which allows students to be placed in job slots within the school at a sub-minimum wage. Some students are placed in unpaid job training sites in the community and receive work-study credits. Work experience generally takes place during second semester of senior year and, in some instances, community placements have turned into paid employment upon graduation. The program serves mostly mentally retarded students though it has recently included some learning disabled students. There is no single resource for student placement upon completion of vocational programming. The Work Experience Coordinator, the VRE's and the VR counselors all do some job development. There is a feeling within the schools that VR should assume more reponsibility for this area.

Conclusion

The cooperative effort in Fargo has progressed to the point that involvement between VR and the schools is part of the established

scheme of things. The development of the local interagency agreement appears to be a major factor in Fargo's success. First, the process of developing the agreement brought the major decision-makers in the region together on a formal basis. The regional VR Administrator as well as local Directors of Special Education and Vocational Education have been actively involved in the agreement. Secondly, the completed agreement set out guidelines and timetables for each agency to follow in working with the others, thus encouraging and facilitating cooperation. The VRE's, in particular, use the agreement as a manual and refer to it almost daily. Finally, the agreement contributed to an atmosphere of communication and flexibility which was apparent throughout Fargo's operations.

The development of the position of the VRE is another important element in Fargo's success. The existence of VRE's allows better use of the resources of vocational education and casts VR in a complementary rather than duplicative role. Special education and vocational education have primary responsibility for programming during high school while VR takes part in long range planning. All three agencies cooperate in the transition from high school and VR then assumes primary responsibility for programming. This model allows for a minimum of duplication and appears to make the best use of existing resources.

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PROJECT WORK ABILITY

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SITE VISIT: JANUARY 19 - 24, 1984

Background

The focus of California's statewide interagency effort is Project Work Ability, a cooperative program of vocational training and work experience for special education high school students. Project Work Ability encourages local initiative in developing a comprehensive program to include assessment, employment preparation, training, work experience and supportive services. The goal is to increase the employment potential of secondary handicapped students.

California's state agency collaboration has recently been updated and formalized in a March, 1984 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the State Department of Education (SDE) which includes both special and vocational education, the State Department of Rehabilitation (SDR) and the Employment Development Department (EDD). The MOU delineates each agency's area of responsibility concerning Project Work Ability. As a result, a system is established for liaison activities, coordination of resources and general cooperation between the agencies in regard to serving handicapped youth between 16 and 21 years of age.

The inclusion of EDD, the employment security agency, in the California program is a unique feature of the interagency effort. Besides being responsible for employment security programming, EDD administered CETA and now is responsible for administering the state portion of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). This helps encourage close cooperation between Work Ability projects and local JTPA agencies. Project Work Ability was designed in anticipation of JTPA in order to establish a mechanism for accessing JTPA funds. This emphasis on coordination with JTPA and EDD local offices is a distinctive strength of Project Work Ability.

Planning

Approximately five years ago, a state interagency committee was convened which included representatives from SDE, SDR, EDD, and other major agencies concerned with the education, training and employment of handicapped youth. After three years of struggle a policy statement was issued regarding the education, training and employment of handicapped individuals. This action created an environment of willingness to negotiate for Project Work Ability. In addition, a SDE two year study completed in 1981 provided substantive information concerning the status of vocational programming for special education students. The study's major findings indicated that most special education

students had limited access to vocational services. This study evoked SDE, Office of Special Education's concern that special education students were not being adequately prepared for the labor market. Therefore, Project Work Ability was initiated in November 1981 as a pilot project in the Riverside and San Bernardino Counties in order to test the concept of work experience for disabled youth.

In 1982, SDE committed a total of $1,000,000 of 94-142 discretionary funds for Project Work Ability. These funds were made available to local education agencies (LEA) to be used as an incentive to start Work Ability programs across the state. SDE, EDD and SDR staff conducted local workshops on a regional basis to alert schools about the grants. In order to be considered for funding, each school site had to project the number of handicapped students to be placed in work experience (WE) and each grant application had to be signed by the local SDR and EDD administrators. Initially, twenty projects received funding and as additional monies became available, fourteen more projects were funded to participate in the Work Ability Program. Seventeen of the local EDD field offices had their budgets augmented by a total amount of $491,392 in order to specifically coordinate with the Work Ability programs.

In September of 1982, EDD, SDE and SDR signed a non-financial interagency agreement which documented SDE, EDD, SDR and the LEAs roles and responsibilities concerning Project Work Ability. The agreement was developed as a composite of the site proposals. The agreement also specified that EDD would contribute $235,000 from the state Youth Employment Development Act (YEDA) funds for minimum wage benefits for approximately 350 to 400 students. The original 20 of the 34 sites received the YEDA funding. SDR estimated that 1.3 million dollars in state and local in-kind resources would be provided schools to facilitate early acceptance of eligible students as DR clients.

In order that the Project Work Ability model could be improved and replicated, an evaluation plan to document and measure immediate outcomes was developed by an evaluation advisory committee composed of project directors and representatives of the three state agencies. CETA forms were used to gather data. The evaluation plan resulted in a sophisticated data collection system of obvious benefit to determining positive program out-comes. This aids in marketing the Work Ability Program concept.

Overview of State Cooperative Efforts

Project Work Ability site managers were given discretion on how to combine PL 94-142 funding with other available resources. In addition to the resources available through SDR and EDD, each Work Ability Program was required to garner local community support for student employment and to sensitize community groups and employers concerning the skills and strengths of students with disabilities.

PL 94-142 funding was used by local project sites primarily for additional staff to act as job developers, teachers aides, WE monitors, interpreters, and providers of employment preparation training. The 94-142 discretionary funds were also used to purchase vocational testing materials, provide transportation, pay for WE stipends and at one site develop a computerized job match system.

While interagency cooperation and coordination was considered a critical factor to the program's success, the type and amount of interagency involvement varied from project to project. The cause for this variance can be attributed primarily to state agency budget constraints. Therefore, the extent of the local EDD and DR offices' participation in the Work Ability sites had to be negotiated because Work Ability activities augmented their regular work load.

EDD local offices provided job services, including job development for WE and unsubsidized employment, job search workshops and labor market information. The YEDA funds were administered through the local CETA office; however, the EDD local offices managed the paperwork for the YEDA/WE stipends and the targeted job tax credit (TJTC) vouchering.

Coordination with DR resulted in increased referrals and greater acceptance of students as DR clients. The local offices provided some assistance in job development. DR also provided support services such as transportation, tools, equipment, and assistive devices.

During the 1983-84 school year, the 34 Work Ability projects were representative of California's diverse geographic regions and educational units: 18 public school districts, 11 county offices of education, 4 Special Education Local Planning Agencies (SELPA) and one Regional Occupational Program Center. Participating schools totaled 229: 162 regular public high schools, 30 special day schools or centers, 14 continuation high schools, 12 non-public schools, 7 alternative schools and 4 adult education schools.

As of May 1983, a total of 1,903 special education students between the ages of 15 and 22 years participated in Work Ability projects. Project Work Ability emphasizes serving students who are most ready for WE placement. Therefore, 93% of the students were 16 years of age or older. Sixty-nine percent of the students were male and 70% were white, 16% were Hispanic, and 11% were black.

According to the 1983 statistics, Project Work Ability served a range of handicapping conditions. Seventy-three per cent had specific learning disabilities, including impaired understanding, speaking and/or writing. Sixteen percent were classified as mentally retarded. Twenty-four percent were classified as severely disabled which represents a larger proportion than exists in the statewide special education population. This fact

seems to suggest that Project Work Ability is having more success serving the severly disabled than many other interagency vocational programs. Almost two-thirds of the Work Ability students experienced one or more severe employment limitations including cognitive or perceptual limitations, communication impairments, short attention spans, and social or emotional instabilities. The employment limitations for the severely disabled were two to three times more prevalent than for the other Work Ability participants.

The three state agencies provide continual extensive coordination and direction for the Work Ability programs. In addition, SDE assigned a Project Director to oversee the Work Ability program to ensure statewide coordination and to provide necessary support. The Project Director's ability to remain flexible while working with a wide variety of projects is critical to the overall success of the program. Another management strategy involves the convening of periodic statewide conferences attended by Work Ability site managers and state agency representatives. The conferences provide an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the Work Ability projects, to exchange ideas and information, to share concerns and receive assistance from state level representatives. A Project Work Ability Steering Committee, composed of site manager representatives, also meets regularly with the Project Director to address management and programmatic issues and concerns.

Each Work Ability project was responsible for establishing an advisory committee, soliciting community support, and actively involving parents in the program. As expected, the level of advisory committee, community and parent involvement varied considerably from site to site. Typically, the advisory committees included a range of individuals representing: interagency providers, community based organizations, employment and training agencies, such as CETA and the Private Industry Councils (PICs), Youth Employment Service (YES) offices, pre-existing special education councils, and parents of participating students. Some advisory committees acted solely as steering committees while others were more active in publicizing the program within the community and engaging in job development activities. All the advisory committees provided a means for institutionalizing the joint planning effort.

Marketing the program to the community is considered an important aspect of ensuring program continuity. Program visibility has been attempted through media coverage, distribution of brochures to service organizations, such as Kiwanis, Rotary, or Lions, and presentations to business organizations, such as Chambers of Commerce or Business-Industry Councils. Unfortunately, past community involvement activities have generated few employers interested in providing work experience sites.

Securing active parent involvement in the program was a difficult task. Initial contact with the parents usually occurs at the Individual Education Plan (IEP) conference. Parental permission

for their child to participate in the program and to transfer information to DR is obtained at this meeting. However, for many LEAs engaging additional parent involvement in program support or job development activities has not been successful.

Evaluation of the 1983/84 program data indicates that diagnostic assessment was critial for increasing the employment potential of the Work Ability student. Vocational assessments ranged from paper and pencil tests of achievement and/or interests to manipulative measures of dexterity or skill levels. Students were tested for vocational potential interests and apititude, independent living skills, fine and gross motor skills, and scholastic aptitude. Medical and pyschological/psychiatric evaluations were also completed. The assessment process helped students make realistic career choices, assisted teachers in recommending academic and vocational classes, and assisted program staff match students with work experience slots.

During 1982/83, the content and extent of employment preparation training offered at each program site varied; however, the amount of training increased as a result of the Work Ability emphasis. Classroom training included instruction in job seeking, job keeping, and job behavior skills. Career exploration activities were also incorporated into the curricula. Traditional vocational courses offered at high schools and vocational courses offered at Regional Occupational Program Centers provided specific job skill training. As of May 1983, 57% of the students had completed one or more vocational education courses. These courses included: industrial arts, trade and industry, office occupations, home economics, agriculture, health occupations, consumer and technical education, distributive education, food services, restaurant training, auto-related skills, merchandising, graphic arts, grocery checking, assembly and machine tooling.

The 1982/83 evaluation results indicated that work experience was the major factor influencing the employment potential of the Work Ability students. Students gained first hand knowledge of employer expectations and also developed new job skills. Work experience helped increase each student's self-confidence and knowledge of the world of work. This, therefore, enhanced students' ability to make realistic decisions concerning jobs and careers.

Of the 2,051 students enrolled during the 1982/83 school year 1,176 students participated in paid work experience. WE training was provided by the private sector (61%), public agencies (14%), and the schools (25%). WE opportunities, included: auto repairs, health care, retail sales, child care, electronic assembly, food preparation and service occupations. Ten weeks at half time was generally the length of most WE placements. The employers cooperated in matching students with jobs. The work sites were closely monitored which was extremely important for providing needed support to both the student and employer.

The employment rate for the 364 students participating in public sector work experience was 41 percent. The 812 students participating in private sector work experience had a higher employment rate at 51 percent.

Job development was a time consuming and highly labor intensive activity involving staff from the LEA and the local EDD and DR offices. The most effective method of soliciting employer involvement was to offer a subsidized wage. For the 1982/83 school year, YEDA funding for 20 sites was the primary source of WE wages. The other sites secured funding from P.L. 94-142, CETA and DR in order to provide the WE allowances. Project sites were permitted to provide flexible WE allowances ranging from $2.55 to $3.35, depending on the student's level of ability.

Student support services included counseling, transportation, assistive devices, meals and/or clothing and other. Ninety-five percent of the Work Ability students received some form of support services from LEAs, DR and/or EDD. Ninety-one percent of the project participants received general and specialized counseling. Transportation assistance was also a critical support service. Resolving transportation problems was necessary in order for many students to participate in work experience. Nearly half of the students required such assistance.

At the state level, the 1983/84 school year was viewed as a period of transition for the Work Ability projects to eventually become self-sufficient. Thirty-three projects continued to receive operating funds from SDE while exploring ways of continuing the program after state funding ends. Work Ability is unique in that it is an attempt to change the system of providing vocational education to handicapped students. The school districts are expected to incorporate the Work Ability concept and thus continue the program. Integrating Work Ability with local JTPA activities is also a primary focus. The accessing of JTPA funds for WE allowances became even more crucial as the YEDA funds were eliminated from the state budget.

Besides the continued direction and support given the individual project sites, state level efforts are focused on expanding the Work Ability program to other school districts. Thirty-four school districts received Adoption Grants which provide $2,000 for release time in order to research materials and visit Work Ability programs. The intent of these Adoption Grants is to facilitate the school districts' adoption of the Work Ability Program. In addition, five demonstration programs were selected from existing Work Ability projects to provide assistance to the 34 school districts that received Adoption Grants and to other districts interested in implementing Project Work Ability.

There is strong commitment to continue Project Work Ability as evidenced by the recently updated MOU between SDE, SDR and EDD. Also, $350,000 of EDD funds has been released in order to provide WE wages for Work Ability students in their senior year of high school. More involvement of private business will be a focus in

the future. Successful business cooperation has resulted in Pacific Mutual printing, at no cost to Work Ability, approximately 20,000 brochures. Another future emphasis will involve greater efforts toward placing the more severely disabled into work experience training.

Tri-County Consortium for Special Education

The Tri-County Consortium for Special Education is located in the foothills of the Sierras and includes Calaveras, Tuolumne and Amador Counties. This rural mountain area is spsarsely populated. The local economy is primarily service oriented and depends on tourism, recreational sports and ranching. A lack of large businesses contributes to a high unemployment rate of fifteen percent.

There are approximately 14,000 K-12 students in these counties. The Tri-County office serves all the special needs students for the seventeen school districts. Eighty special education teachers are employed to serve approximately 1,400 special needs students, representing the full range of handicapping conditions.

Planning

The Special Education Director, in an effort to improve vocational programming for handicapped students in the three county area, wrote a proposal for P.L. 94-142 discretionary funds. The proposal was to test the concept of using vocational technicians and was the forerunner of Tri-County's Work Ability program.

EDD, DR and CETA participated in the initial planning of the Work Ability project. A proposal was submitted and the Tri-County Consortium was selected as one of the first twenty-two sites to receive Work Ability funding. As a result, Tri-County also received YEDA funding to be used for WE stipends and wages.

Administration/Structure

The Special Education Director is responsible for the management of the Work Ability program. Approximately 15% of his time is devoted to Work Ability activities. This involves completing required reports, supervision of staff, fund raising and coordination with state level Work Ability affairs.

The Tri-County Consortium employs four special education coordinators to supervise the teachers and ensure that all the school districts receive needed special education services. The SPED coordinators also supervise the Work Ability vocational technicians. The technicians meet regularly with the SPED Director and in addition receive assistance from the SPED teachers concerning the aptitude and needs of the Work Ability students.

Initially the salaries for the vocational technicians were provided by the P.L. 94-142 discretionary funds designated for Work Ability projects. During school year 1983-1984, the technicians' salaries were covered by both P.L. 94-142 and JTPA funds. This arrangement freed a portion of the 94-141 monies to fund for WE stipends for the severely disabled student ineligible for JTPA.

The vocational technicians are not educators but have knowledge and skills concerning vocational training and employment. They serve as a link between the student, the employer, the special education teacher, and the vocational education teacher. Approximately 80% of the technicians' time is spent in job development, job placement and employer follow-up activities. The remaininng 20% of their time is spent on vocational programming concerns.

An advisory committee was formed in March, 1982, to lend support and assist in the development of the Work Ability program. Committee members include representatives from all the educational and handicapped related agencies in the three county areas and also representatives from the local EDD and DR offices. Although the committee only meets on a semi-annual basis, regular contact throughout the year is maintained by the SPED Director and agency representatives.

Programming

In California, handicapped students are served by two educational programs, special day class and resource specialist programs. The resource specialist programs serve the more severely handicapped. There are six high schools in the tri-county area with a handicapped student population of approximately 120 juniors and seniors. Forty of these students were too severely disabled to qualify for the WE component of the Work Ability program. Sixty seven of the remaining 80 students were placed in private sector job sites during the 1983-1984 school year.

Each of the six high schools offers vocational education courses. Because few students go to college and therefore have a need for vocational training,, vocational education is highly regarded. Some Regional Occupational Program (ROP) courses are also offered in the service area. All of the special education students are eligible for the regular vocational education courses. As a result of the Work Ability program, several of the high schools also offer programs for students who are unable to handle regular vocational education.

The vocational technicians are responsible for assisting the Work Ability students with the vocational education courses. This can take the form of developing accommodations in the classroom and/or acting as an instructional aide in vocational classes. The availability of a person to assist the vocational teachers increases the teachers' receptivity for accepting the SPED students into their classes. The vocational technicians are also responsible for pre-vocational training for the Work Ability

student. Work orientation and career exploration are provided in preparation for the work experience placement.

Work experience slots are usually generated among the small "Mom and Pop" type businesses. A graduated wage is used, starting at $2.85 an hour and gradually raised each month until the student is receiving $3.35 an hour at the end of the work experience. The few severely handicapped students placed in WE receive a stipend and the hours they work are carefully monitored so no SSI benefits are lost. Because of the slow economy, many employers would have been unable to employ a student without the wage incentive. Because the students were paid from another source, the employers were also more interested in the training aspect of the program.

The vocational technicians personally supervise the students on the job site, especially for the beginning two to three days. This, if necessary, provides the students with support and assists the employers in teaching the students about the important job procedures. During the first month of employment, the technicians make weekly follow-up visits and then continue with bi- or tri-weekly visits. Employers were requested to complete evaluation forms and to sign time sheets.

Because of the rural nature of the three county areas, services from state and federal agencies are limited and therefore coordination becomes difficult. Despite the problems, coordination was attempted and resulted in several needed services for the Work Ability program. EDD performed tax vouchering and job referral services and conducted job seeking training workshops. Extensive coordination with the Mother Lode Training Agency resulted in JTPA funding for WE stipends and wages. This accessing of funds was especially critical when the YEDA funding was depleted.

A system for determining student eligibility for DR services was developed and tested during year one of the Work Ability program. Funding limitations caused some difficulties in coordinating activities. However, because of increased state-level emphasis on coordination with education, the Rehabilitation District Administrator assigned a vocational psychologist to negotiate a relationship with the schools. The focus for the tri-county area is primarily on referral and eligibility determination for Work Ability students.

Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

There is no formal vocational evaluation completed for each student. Approximately 20% of the special needs students complete paper and pencil assessments. The more severely disabled students often are tested for fine motor coordination. It is generally felt, because of the small school population, that the special education teachers develop a good understanding of each students interests, skills and abilities. Students do receive a diagnostic assessment from the school psychologists.

The special education coordinators attend all IEP meetings for the Work Ability students. Initially, vocational goals in the IEP are not very specific. Once the student is placed on a job then the technician, the student and the employer establish vocational goals which become a part of the IEP. Coordinating the IEP with the IWRP has recently become an area for cooperation, which reflects the regional DR office's emphasis on developing a relationship with the tri-county schools.

North Orange County Regional Occupational Program

California's Regional Occupational Program (ROP) was developed approximately eleven years ago to augment the vocational training programs offered by local school districts. The ROP specific skill training programs are either community based or located on the high school campuses and are open to all students. The state reimburses the ROP agency for the costs of the program based on average daily attendance.

The Work Ability project is managed and operated by the North Orange County Regional Occupational Program (NOCROP). NOCROP serves five school districts and operates 1,000 community classrooms at 500 different locations. Most of the NOCROP vocational offerings are competency-based, open-entry, open-exit programs. A Business Advisory Group plus the conduct of regular market surveys by ROPs Division of Research and Development helps ensure that the ROP offerings are reflective of the current job market.

Planning

The North Orange County area has a history of cooperation between the local agencies of DR, EDD, CETA/JTPA and education. Therefore, when Project Work Ability was proposed, many of the necessary agency connections were already in existence which facilitated a successful planning period. This preliminary work on Project Work Ability helped NOCROP receive YEDA funding for the largest number of WE slots in the state.

Administration/Structure

During the 1982-1983 school year, the NOCROP Work Ability project was targeted toward the Fullerton Union High School District's disabled student population. During the 1983-1984 school year, the Work Ability program was expanded to include the additional four secondary school districts served by NOCROP.

A comprehensive vocational plan for handicapped students was developed by the Fullerton Union High School District based on vocational services provided by NOCROP's Career and Vocational Assessment Center. The special education departments at each high school were involved with the Work Ability project via the IEP process and the identification of Work Ability as a means to provide vocational programming to disabled students.

Staff from NOCROP who participated in Work Ability consisted of: one Project Coordinator, one rehabilitation counselor, two vocational evaluators, and one project technician. The Fullerton High School District contributed the following staff: two rehabilitation counselors, one vocational evaluator aide, one instructional aide and one secretary. For the hiring of personnel, Fullerton utilized P.L. 94-142 and VEA Sub Part 2 and 3 handicapped and disadvantaged monies.

Coordination between NOCROP and the school district created the ability to provide comprehensive services of assessment, training and placement. To assist in the placement process,, the EDD District Administrator assigned a full-time Employment Program Representative to work with NOCROP and the local DR office as a job developer for WE training sites. The job developer made the initial contact with primarily private sector employers. A rehabilitation counselor then followed-up to arrange for a student interview.

Communication between the agencies was important for ensuring the program's success. The Advisory Group provided an important vehicle for establishing this communication. It was composed of representatives from the following agencies: Fullerton Union High School District, NOCROP, DVR and EDD. The Advisory Group met monthly and functioned primarily as a steering committee to oversee program operation, identify barriers and resolve problems through consensus. Each group member had agency decision-making authority. This helped resolve problems quickly and expedited project activities.

Interagency agreements between NOCROP, DVR and EDD clarified roles and responsibilities pertaining to the Work Ability program and thus also helped the communications process. Through the interagency agreement with DVR, NOCROP was able to share the results of the student's vocational assessments, grade transcripts and psychological reports. Duplication of effort and costs for DVR was therefore reduced. The interagency agreement with EDD outlined the services that EDD would provide the Work Ability program. These included job development activities and the provision of job seeking workshops for the Work Abilitiy student.

The expanded 1983-1984 Work Ability program existed on multi-funding including: two JTPA exemplary youth program grants, VEA Sub-Part 3 funds, Work Ability 94-142 discretionary monies from the state, a Work Ability Adopt-A-School grant and a separate contract with the Fullerton Union High School District. Fullerton remained the largest of the NOCROP Work Ability programs. With the expansion of Work Ability to include the other four school districts served by NOCROP, the program organization, as indicated by the multi-funding, became more complex. Each school districts' services to special needs students vary and therefore adopted the Work Ability concept according to a variety of needs.

In order to integrate the Work Ability program into the additional four school districts' vocational offerings, existing school district were utilized. Each school district has a Career Guidance Specialist (CGS) who is the primary link between NOCROP and the school districts. The CGS is responsible for career guidance and vocational programming for all students, including Work Ability participants. NOCROP continued to provide vocational assessment services for the Work Ability students. In addition, the Specialist, Handicapped Services is responsible for working with outside agencies to assist disabled students in the ROP programs. This person is the liaison between NOCROP and the school districts' special education personnel and helped monitor the Work Ability students' progress.

NOCROP has maintained an excellent relationship with CETA/JTPA for over five years. There are five JTPA planning jurisdictions in the Orange County service delivery area. One of these jurisdictions is the City of LaHabra which provides services to 10 cities roughly comparative to the school districts serviced by NOCROP. Two JTPA grants to NOCROP served both economically disadvantaged and handicapped students. These JTPA grants were utilized whenever possible for Work Ability students which paid for their WE wages/stipends. The opportunity to enroll Work Ability students in the JTPA programs allowed NOCROP to use Work Ability PL 94-142 monies for WE stipends for the more severely disabled student.

Three NOCROP employees worked with the five school districts in order to recruite students for the two JTPA programs, complete JTPA applications, and work with the Career Guidance Specialists. NOCROP also contributed a job developer to conduct pre-vocational seminars for the students participating in the JTPA work experience programs. This working relationship with JTPA created the opportunity to enroll more handicapped students into the JTPA programs.

Programming

The purpose of NOCROP's Work Ability program is to provide project participants with appropriate training necessary for transition from school into subsidized employment. In order to accomplish this, Work Ability broadens the range of vocational options available to handicapped students by primarily focusing on the provision of WE training. In many instances Work Ability acts as a catalyst for changing the type and amount of vocational programs offered within each school district.

Work Ability funnels special education students into NOCROP's training courses. The CGSs receive NOCROP's vocational evaluation reports regarding recommendations for vocational training. They then try to match the WE placement with the training. All students referred for WE placement services are required to attend the Pre-Employment Skills Training (PEST) seminar. PEST was developed because JTPA contracted with on NOCROP to provide the pre-vocational training for the students participating in the

two JTPA programs. JTPA helps fund part of the salary for the job developer who is responsible for the training. PEST is a one day job seeking and job keeping skills training program. It is conducted at the NOCROP center and all schools agreed to provide transportation to the center. Participation in the PEST seminar is a requirement for all JTPA and Work Ability Students. JTPA has been able to place all the Work Ability students who participated in the JTPA programs and attended the PEST program. The complementary services provided by JTPA and NOCROP have helped to maintain a successful program. A JTPA representative attends all the Work Ability staff meetings thus providing a means for resolving programmatic issues.

As mentioned, during the 1982-1983 school year, the local EDD office was actively involved in the Work Ability program with the Fullerton Union High School District. The EDD job developer was primarily responsible for recruiting WE employers. He received specific information concerning each student's interest, aptitudes, preferred geographical location and the type of work appropriate for the student. After initial contact with the employers the schools' rehabilitation counselors followed-up to arrange job interviews. Approximately 70 employers were contacted resulting in 55 employers who participated in the program. Approximately 49 students were placed. Because Work Abilitiy paid for the students' wages, employers were more willing to contribute the effort toward training. Locating WE sites would have been greatly hampered without the funding for WE stipends and wages. In addition to job development activities, the project rehabilitation counselors conducted career education workshops, provided work adjustment counseling for inappropriate work behaviors and made all interagency referrals.

Because of funding reductions, the EDD local office was forced to limit participation in the Work Ability program during the 1983-1984 school year. However, the EDD office for Orange County recently received an OJT contract through the Private Industry Council (PIC) specifically for handicapped students. It was anticipated that this grant would enable the EDD office to once again actively participate in the Work Ability program.

Also because of budget restrictions, the DR involvement in Work Ability was limited. Dr has staff responsible for receiving referrals from schools and screening and evaluating students for eligibility. DR wants to pursue closer relationships with secondary schools, however, the extent of the relationship will be defined according to budget limitations. In one example of good cooperation, a VR counselor is assigned to two school districts and primarily carries a student caseload. The Work Ability program refers students to the VR counselor who then determines eligibility and works toward placement. The counselors received a copy of NOCROP's vocational evaluation report which is used by DR and provides a cost savings. In general, DR provides traditional rehabilitation services: the provision of assistive devices, career counseling, and some transportation assistance to WE sites.

Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

The NOCROP Vocational Assessment Center provides several services: pre-vocational testing, a two-day vocational assessment, a four-day extended vocational assessment, vocational counseling, job seeking skill training, situational assessment, work adjustment services and placement services. The vocational assessment process at the majority of schools is not extensive and therefore most schools are beginning to use the NOCROP center for evaluations.

The two-day evaluation process is provided all Work Ability students. The first day involves the completion of interest surveys, academic testing and hands-on aptitude and skill assessments. The second day is more flexible and focuses on career exploration projects. The evaluation report is returned to the schools and shared with special education teachers, the CGS and the student. The report is used to try and channel the student into appropriate WE training and if possibsle ROP skill training.

The evaluation plan may be incorporated into the IEP as vocational goals. The CGS will work with the special education personnel to develop vocational goals for the IEP. Sometimes the CGS will participate in the IEP meetings.

IEP coordination with the IWRP has not been an area of concentrated development. If a Work Ability student is also a DR client, then DR will often utilize the Center's vocational assessments and therefore will use the evaluation results in the development of the IWRP.

Orange County

Besides the NOCROP Work Ability program, there are three other Work Ability programs in Orange County: Irvine Unified School District, Huntington Beach Union High School District, and Garden Grove Union High School District. All three programs represent variations on the Work Ability concept. Some form of pre-vocational training is provided involving career awareness and job seeking and keeping skill training. Integration with the existing ROP courses is attempted in order to provide vocational skill training. Work experience training continues to provide the focus for these Work Ability programs. In order to provide WE placements, coordination with EDD, DR and especially JTPA is important for job development assistance and the provision of WE stipends/wages. In addition, a vocational assessment process has been developed to assist in WE placement and to identify vocational goals for the IEP.

Conclusion

A comprehensive evaluation of the 1982-1982 Work Ability program verifies that Work Ability accomplished and exceeded the goals established in the 1982 Interagency Agreement. Work Ability

demonstrates a high level of commitment among state agencies, local education agencies, community groups and employers in order to improve handicapped youth's transition from school into unsubsidized employment. This commitment is especially noteworthy given the program's complexity and the high costs resulting from the provision of WE training.

During the first two years, the Work Ability program has been successfully implemented at 34 sites. It is evident that most of the school districts will continue the services instituted by Work Ability thus accomplishing a major program goal of systemic change regarding vocational programming for disabled youth. To do this, however, requires long-term funding commitments and continual interagency coordination.

The reliance on local initiative to implement the Work Ability concept according to local needs is a distinctive strength of Project Work Ability. Not only does it aid in program endurance but also positively influences dissemination/replication efforts. This is specificially critical given that the overall goal of Project Work Ability is dissemination and replication of the program concept. To accomplish this task, state level funding assistance is needed. The use of state monies for Adoption Grants and to fund five existing Work Ability programs to assist in the replication process is important for ensuring program expansion. In general, California's initial efforts to improve the vocational services for handicapped secondary students have been successful and have set the stage for program expansion.

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RICHLAND COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 2, VR PUBLIC SCHOOL COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

RICHLAND COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

SITE VISIT: JANUARY 25 - 26, 1984

Background

The South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVR) was established as a separate state agency in 1957. It was formerly part of the Department of Education. Since being named to head SCVR eight years ago, the present Commissioner has sought to develop a broad range of state-operated vocational rehabilitation programs. The result is a network of sixteen Vocational Rehabilitation Centers which provide comprehensive evaluation and adjustment training services to handicapped citizens. Clients in the Centers perform subcontract work from businesses and industry, simulating actual employment. Ten of these Centers also contain Work Activity Center programs which provide services to severely mentally retarded citizens, in an attempt to take them out of institutions and prepare them for their return to the community. A Rehabilitation Comprehensive Center was created in 1978 in order to provide physical therapy, occupational therapy, activities of daily living and speech therapy to severely handicapped individuals to help them become more independent and ready for employment. In addition, the Department operates two residential facilities for the treatment of alcoholism.

Overview of State Cooperative Efforts

A state-level agreement has existed between SCVR and the Department of Education since 1966. Its main function is to establish a broad framework for cooperation between vocational rehabilitation and individual school districts. The first "Coordinated Program of Special Education and Vocational Rehabilitation" was initiated in 1964 as a model program. Since that time, VR has entered into local agreements with 38 of the 92 school districts in South Carolina. Fifteen of these agreements involve the establishment of a work component at a comprehensive high school. This work component takes the form of satellite workshops which are linked to community-based Vocational Rehabilitation Centers and operate year-around. High school students, age 16 or older, perform subcontract work and are paid accordingly. Procurement of the necessary subcontract work is done by SCVR employees. SCVR is presently evaluating the feasibility of establishing work components in additional school districts which have expressed an interest in the program.

The establishment of a work component in a high school typically involves an agreement with the school district to locate a VR counselor on-site and to staff the workshop with a Production Coordinator who is paid for by SCVR. The school system, in turn, is expected to assign a special education teacher to the program to provide supervision of students and supplemental academic services. Those agreements not involving a work component focus on the availability of VR counselors to accept referrals, determine eligibility and provide VR services upon request.

Overall, 9,000 of the 48,000 referrals made to SCVR in FY83 were from high schools. This is the single highest source of referrals. Overall, 94% of VR school cases which were successfully closed involved placement in competitive employment. Only 0.8% of VR school cases were closed in sheltered workshops.

The factors which seem to underly cooperation between vocation rehabilitation , special education and vocational education at the state level are:

- SCVR is committed to being a partner in any program involving vocational rehabilitation services.

- SCVR has taken the lead in developing a network of Vocational Rehabilitation Centers which serve handicapped students through school-based satellite workshops which perform subcontract work from industry.

- SCVR works directly with local school systems to develop local agreements which in 40% of the cases involve the assignment of a rehabilitation counselor to one or more school systems and the development of a work component in the school.

- South Carolina is relatively small in population (3.1 million) and, with the exception of three metropolitan areas, is rural in nature. It is also compact in size. Any part of the state can be reached in 2 1/2 hours by car from the centrally located state capitol of Columbia.

- The present SCVR Commissioner was once a public school Superintendent and has a strong personal commitment to the Vocational Rehabilitation Public School Program.

- The Director of Vocational Education (located in the Department of Education) once worked for SCVR.

Richland-County-School-District-No.2,-Vocational-Rehabilitation-Public-School Program

Richland County School District No. 2 encompasses the suburbs of the state capitol, Columbia, South Carolina. It serves 10,500 students total, with 3,680 in grades 9 - 12. The district is predominantly suburban in nature, is experiencing rapid growth, and contains a broad cross section of industry.

Administration/Structure

The basis for the Vocational Rehabilitation - Public School Program (VR-PS) is the "Plan for Cooperative Services for Handicapped Youth" which was entered into by the SCVR Commissioner and the Richland County School District 2 Superintendent in July 1982. The Cooperative Program itself has been in effect since 1966.

VR-PS program presently serves 148 secondary level special needs students from both Richland Northeast High School and Spring Valley High School. It is located in the Wilson Vocational Center which is connected with Spring Valley High School. The core of the two year old program is a Vocational Rehabilitation Office and Work Adjustment Center which is staffed by:

- Project Supervisor
- Rehabilitation Counselor
- Evaluator
- Two Production Coordinators
- Two Casework Assistants

The Project Supervisor is an SCVR counselor who is responsible to the Metro Area Supervisor for the operation of the VR office and Work Adjustment Center. He is responsible for management of a caseload of 94 Spring Valley handicapped students, 62 former students, plus 50 adult handicapped clients from the surrounding area. He is also responsible for securing, coordinating, and supervising work contracts with assistance from VR-PS Staff. The Rehabilitation Counselor maintains a similar caseload of Richland Northeast High School students, former students, and adult clients. She is based in Spring Valley High School and also assists with the operation of the Work Adjustment Center. An Evaluator is responsible for vocational assessment of clients from both high schools, coordination of adjustment services, and conducting personal, social and job preparation training. The Production Coordinators supervise the activities of the Work Adjustment Center, which is a satellite of the Columbia Rehabilitation Center. Students assigned to the Work Adjustment Center perform subcontract work from companies in the area consisting primarily of assembly and salvage tasks. Students are paid a piece rate for work performed. Casework Assistants are responsible for the clerical work connected with the VR caseloads. All staff, with the exception of one Production Coordinator, are funded by the SCVR. That person is a Special Education teacher provided by the School District.

The Cooperative Program is reviewed regularly by SCVR Program Specialists, Special Services officials from Richland County School District 2, and the South Carolina Department of Education. Criteria used to measure the success of the

Cooperative Program include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Vocational assessment must accurately measure client capabilities and limitations in functional terms.

- Vocational assessment must result in the recommendation of vocational goals which are both realistic for the client and available in the local community.

- Adjustment prescriptions must identify client's skill deficits/functional limitations that can be addressed through social and work adjustment training.

- Sufficient contract work must be available to provide supervised work experience for a minimum of 25 students four days per week.

- Workshop procedures and records must conform to U.S. Department of Labor standards.

- Goals and objectives as specified by the clients' IEP's must be met or modified as appropriate.

- Clients completing the program must be placed in competitive employment consistent with their vocational objectives and for a period of 60 days.

- The Cooperative Program will complete a minimum of 140 IWRP's and produce 100 successful placements per year.

Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

Handicapped students are typically referred to the program at age 15 1/2 to 16. Diagnostic services such as initial screening, general medical evaluation, special medical evaluation, psychological testing and evaluation, vocational assessment and preliminary counseling and guidance are purchased or provided by SCVR. After vocational assessment is completed, a joint staffing (including a VR counselor, evaluator, school guidance counselor and teachers), is held to review findings and agree upon a course of action. This becomes the basis for the student's IWRP, IEP and Adjustment Prescription. IEP's are completed by school staff after input is provided by VR staff on vocational and disability related factors. IWRP's are completed by the VR counselor and client based on the recommendations made during the joint staffing and the client's input. Adjustment Prescriptions are completed by VR and school staff. They identify client's skill deficits/functional limitations that can be corrected and/or modified through the provision of personal, social and work adjustment training.

Programming

Program options available to handicapped students in the District include:

- Placement in competitive employment by VR counselors with assistance from special education staff.
- Individually contracted on-the-job training.
- Participation in the recently developed PWI program which places clients in the community-based training slots for negotiated lengths of time. Students are paid a training stipend by SCVR.
- Integration into regular vocational and academic classes.
- Assignment to a resource room and integration into regular academics.
- Assignment to the Work Adjustment Center.
- In-school job assignments such as cafeteria maintenance and child care.
- Pre-vocational training in housekeeping services.
- Vocational training in food services.
- Participation in Personal and Social Adjustment Training (which emphasizes daily living skills and pre-vocational training for more severely handicapped students).

Conclusion

The Richland County School District 2 Cooperative Program epitomizes the close working relationship which is achieved between the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department and 15 school districts containing a work component. The key to the Cooperative Program is the assignment of two VR Counselors, an Evaluator, a Production Coordinator and two Casework Assistants (all SCVR employees) to form the nucleus of a Vocational Rehabilitation Office and Work Adjustment Center which is located in one high school. These staff, working cooperatively with district administrators and special education staff, provide direction and focus for the vocational preparation and placement of handicapped youth. Other key features of the Cooperative Program include:

1. The Vocational Rehabilitation Office is located in the Vocational Center and is clearly identified by its own entrance and sign. This establishes the definite presence of VR and provides a clear identity for the cooperative Program.

2. The Work Adjustment Center and other special education programs are all located in the Vocational Center which is adjacent to the comprehensive high school. This promotes integration into vocational education offerings and demonstrates the commitment to preparing special needs students for later life. As vocational education teachers have come to accept special need students in vocational classes, they have also promoted their placement in community jobs. This is important, since vocational teachers have high credibility with employers.

3. SCVR pays for a Production Coordinator for the Work Adjustment Center and provides an Evaluator to serve all special needs students. In return, the school provides a Production Coordinator and free space for the VR office.

4. SCVR staff are viewed as integral members of the school team. The high visibility of counselors assigned full time to the schools is greatly valued by administrators, teachers and parents. Teachers seem to appreciate the value of an on-site VR consultant, plus the ability to refer handicapped students who may not be in special education programs. School administrators feel that parents are more willing to cooperate with a school-based VR program than a separate VR office.

5. By local agreement, VR counselors offer services to disabled adults participating in the Adult Education Program offered by the District.

6. Additional consultation and audio visual materials are available to special education staff through the VR office.

7. The Work Adjustment Center serves students on a 12 month basis.

8. School age caseloads in the Columbia geographic area are more cost effective and have a higher "rehabilitation rate" (percentage of cases eventually closed into competitive employment), than the comparable general caseload. An analysis of the 1,740 successful closures for July 1982 - June 1983 reveals that final case services for the average school caseload closure were 21% lower than expenditures for the average case on general caseloads. Seventy-one percent of the school referrals were successfully rehabilitated compared to 40% statewide. In addition to lower case costs, VR officials believe that special needs students have a higher retention rate once placed on the job.

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ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL DISTRICT

ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI

SITE VISIT: JANUARY 12 - 16, 1984

Background

Missouri's efforts to promote cooperation between special education, vocational education, and vocational rehabilitation began in 1965, well in advance of most federal and state initiatives in this area. The motivation for the cooperative effort was derived from the recognition that successful vocational placements (VR 26 closures) could be greatly increased if vocational/life planning was begun while the (potential) VR client was still in the public school system. This recognition led to the development of a cooperative delivery system which addressed both the educational and vocational needs of all SPED students.

The Missouri Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (MDVR), the Division of Special Education, and the Division of Vocational Education are all incorporated under the jurisdiction of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. While there is no state level agreement between the three divisions, the Commissioner of the Department has committed the three divisions to assist in the development and monitoring of local cooperative agreements between MDVR and the school districts.

At present, there are 450 high schools in Missouri, of which 139 schools have formal agreements with MDVR. Because of the rural nature of Missouri, many local school districts have not formalized their association with MDVR, but both agencies work cooperatively with the SPED students. Missouri administers 59 area vocational schools which serve 330 regional school districts. In the 1982-83 school year, 26,905 secondary students were provided training in area vocational-technical schools. Nine percent or 2,308 were SPED students. An additional 1700 SPED students were enrolled in the cooperative work program, operated through the secondary schools.

Overview of State Cooperative Efforts

Missouri utilizes several avenues by which vocational education training and experiences are made available to SPED students. Pre-vocational and job readiness activities are begun in 7th grade. In 10th grade, SPED students are assessed for determination of the most appropriate vocational education training program. If the needs of the student cannot be met within the LEA, he is referred to the VRC, VAC and VRE for a determination of the most appropriate training program. This may

be at the area vocational technical school or on the job. This program is administered through the secondary school. Job placements are developed, both within the school and in the community. Students receive school credit for their work and often receive a salary as well.

The ideological commitment to cooperative vocational preparation for SPED students is best exemplified by the allocation of key, specialized personnel from each of the three divisions. Special education provides funds for a Vocational Adjustment Counselor (VAC), who is a SPED-certified teacher and is responsible for job development, placement and supervision. MDVR assigns Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRC) to specific schools (in the more densely populated areas, the schools are the VRC's entire caseload) to evaluate and determine eligibility, participate in the development of the IEP, and work cooperatively with the VAC in job development and placement. Vocational education, through its Special Needs Program, and special education jointly fund the Vocational Resource Educator (VRE). The VRE is a non-teaching professional staff person who provides special resources (e.g. referral to evaluations, equipment modification) which enables the SPED student to succeed in vocational programs. (These three positions will be discussed further in the next section).

In order to more effectively coordinate their cooperatives, VR has adopted the SPED criteria for use in VR-eligibility determination (e.g. levels of IQ). This has enabled all three divisions to use similar definitions to avoid confusion. The divisions also share the responsibility of providing inservice training to educators, the VRE's, VAC's, and VR Counselors. Statewide training sessions have addressed such topics as: 1) VR eligibility requirements for the training of the disabled population; 2) standards for behavior disorders, 3) the benefits of the VRE model and 4) special projects.

The benefits of the cooperative effort in Missouri can be witnessed in two areas: the number of persons served and the number of successful case closures (Status 26). In FY 83, VR closed approximately 5200 cases. Of these, over 55% were physically disabled, 22% were mentally retarded, and 23% were mentally impaired. The schools referred 23% of the clients who were successfuly rehabilitated.

MOVIEW and Missouri LINC

Two other key programs, administered on the state level reinforce cooperative vocational training and benefit SPED (and regular) students. First, during their sophomore year, all students participate in an occupation orientation. The Division of Vocational Education, working with the 3-M company, has developed the MOVIEW (Missouri's Vital Information for Employment and Work) system to be used in concert with general orientation. This system lists both the educational and training requirements for 600 occupations as well as demographic information concerning each occupation throughout the State (e.g.. salary, career

ladder, etc.). The system has been computerized and has an accompanying workbook.

The Division of VE recognized that MOVIEW was too sophisticated for many of the SPED students. As a result, an advisory group was formed to develop BASIC-MOVIEW. This is a similar computerized system which provides information concerning 200 occupations and is written on a third grade reading level. Approximately 347 secondary schools participate in both MOVIEW and BASIC-MOVIEW as do local VR offices. Both systems are updated on a bi-yearly basis. VE holds inservice training sessions to disseminate information concerning the changes. Representatives of the local schools and VR offices attend these training sessions.

The second key program offered through cooperative efforts on the state level is MISSOURI LINC. This project operates within the University of Missouri-Columbia Department of Special Education and Practical Arts and Vocational-Technical Education, College of Education. MISSOURI LINC is funded through both the Division of Special Education and the Division of Vocational Education (Special Needs Programs). The project provides special needs resource information and technical assistance to vocational and special educators. The main objective of LINC is to impact upon the employability of SPED students by providing instructional personnel with the needed skills and information.

MISSOURI LINC offers a variety of services. A hotline is available for school staff to ask questions regarding vocational programs for SPED students. The project produces three types of publications: 1) LINC Letter, a bimonthly newsletter, 2) LINC Papers, an annual series describing various topics in vocational and special education programs, and 3) LINC Facts, which is used to disseminate the results of new research. The project also sponsors credit-granting workshops and conferences for both undergraduates and continuing education through the University of Missouri. A computerized data service provides daily updates on vocational and educational events in Washington, D.C. and in the state. Project Linc also provides information to educational personnel regarding the acquisition of assistive/adaptive devices for SPED students.

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL DISTRICT

St. Joseph is located in Northwestern Missouri. The population of the St. Joseph area is approximately 86,000 citizens, almost all of whom reside in the city. Agriculture is the major industry. The population in this areas has been steadily decreasing over the past decade due to other industries, such as the stockyards and meat producers, leaving the area. The unemployment rate is the highest in the state at 9.5%.

The St. Joseph School District includes three secondary schools and an area vocational center. There are presently over 3400 students enrolled in the high schools and almost half are in

their upper class years. Approximately 9% of the students receive special education class-room instruction.

The St. Joseph School District and the local MDVR initiated the cooperative vocational program in 1965. The program was established to meet the vocational needs of special education students who have achieved the maximal benefits of the academic special education program. The school district recognized the need to provide complementary vocational training to augment the special education program.

Administrative/Structure

The St. Joseph Cooperative School-Work Program features evaluation and training in three settings: the Hillyard Area Vocational-Technical School, the three high schools and in the community.

Students enrolled in the Hillyard School receive a half-day of vocational training and either return to the home schools for academic instruction or are supervised in an OJT setting. Integration of the appropriate course of study is facilitated by the Vocational Adjustment Counselor (VAC) in each of the three high schools, a Vocational Resource Educator (VRE) at the Hillyard School, and the VRC.

The VAC is a non-teaching, special education-funded professional who coordinates the development and implementation of the student's IEP. The VAC's provide consultation to the administrators and instructors at the Hillyard School to ameliorate any problems and promote the vocational success of the SPED students. In particular, the VAC's work closely with the Hillyard School's VRE.

The VRE is a non-teaching professional staff person who coordinates the resources and provides on-site assistance to SPED students. The VRE position is funded through combined sources which include the LEA, Vocational Education's Special Needs Program and Special Education. The VRE has three primary roles and responsibilities. First, the VRE assists SPED students to gain the appropriate vocational training through participation in the IEP. (The VRE provides consultation to the VAC and serves as the Hillyard School's liaison to the students' parents or guardians. Further, the VRE provides counseling services to SPED students to assist them in making career decisions. Second, the VRE serves as a resource to the vocational instructors by providing technical assistance and recommendations concerning curriculum and/or equipment modification and coordinating appropriate tutorial services and remedial instructional programs. Finally, the VRE assists SPED students in securing employment following the completion of vocational training. The VRE is the liaison between the vocational school and the community in job development. Placement activities are coordinated with the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC). The VRE assumes a pivotal role in helping to develop the IWRP and

to insure the correspondence between SPED students' IEP's and IWRP's.

For SPED students attending the Hillyard School, the VRE, VAC, and VRC coordinate vocational programming information, job development and placement, and development of the IWRP. Should the SPED student require ancillary services in preparation prior to acceptance of employment, VR arranges for service provision before graduation (e.g., physical restoration, prothesis, etc.). The VRC works with SPED students as early as their junior year.

For students who do not attend the Hillyard School for their vocational programming, the critical cooperative relationship is that of the VAC and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC). The VAC and the VRC work together to operate the Cooperative School-Work Program. This program allows for the joint planning and provision of special education and vocational rehabilitation services to SPED students through work-study programs. It employs on-the-job training, part-time, and full-time employment.

The cooperative program developed in 1965 by the Missouri Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division of Special Education is now based in State regulations. A written cooperative agreement delineates the roles of SPED, VR, and when needed, VE. The VAC and VRC assigned to three high schools cooperatively develop the IEP and IWRP to insure correspondence between the documents. With permission, the VRC has access to the students' records for use in the IWRP and for determination of the need for special or ancillary services. Both the VAC and VRC are responsible for job development and placement activities. The VAC supervises the students involved in the program. Students become eligible for VR services and enrollment in the program at age 16.

Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

The Vocational Evaluation Center is funded by vocational education and is housed in the Hillyard School. During the 10th grade, all SPED students in the St. Joseph School District are referred to the Evaluation Center for a complete vocational assessment, including vocational interests and aptitudes. VE and VR originally referred SPED students to evaluation centers in Kansas City. The costs of the purchased assessments provided the impetus to establish an evaluation center locally under the jurisdiction of the Vocational Education Special Needs Program. The Hillyard School employs a fulltime Vocational Evaluator. Students are referred for evaluation by SPED instructors, counselors or the VAC.

The Evaluation Center offers a comprehensive range of assessment instruments which are used to evaluate six related areas: 1) work evaluation systems (7 types of instruments); 2) interest tests (5 instruments; 3) aptitude tests (11 instruments); 4) achievement tests (6 instruments); 5) visual, perception and

personality tests (5 instruments); and 6) occupational attitude (1 instrument). The evaluation is generally administered over a three day period. The vocational evaluator is responsible for completing an assessment report and meeting with the student, SPED instructor, the VAC, VRC and parents to provide further information for use in the development of the IEP or IWRP.

As mentioned above, the Vocational Adjustment Counselor (VAC) has the primary responsibility for developing IEP's for students involved in vocational programming. For students attending the Hillyard School, the VAC works cooperatively with the VRE on IEP development. For students enrolled in the Cooperative School-Work Program, the VAC works cooperatively with the VR counselor. In both instances the IWRP is developed cooperatively between VR and the school personnel.

Programming

Vocational Services are generally begun while SPED students are still within the junior high schools. Prevocational and personal adjustment skills are incorporated into the SPED curriculum through the use of films, occupation-related field trips and practical instruction (e.g., occupational health issues, appearance, etc.). In some cases, work stations are developed within the school campus to provide a laboratory experience for the students. During the first two years in high school (9th garde and 10th grades), job preparation is emphasized. By the end of their sophomore year SPED students have selected between the vocational training options and spend their junior and senior years in combined educational-vocational experiences.

As discussed previously, one aspect of the Cooperative School Work Program is the Hillyard Area Vocational Technical School built in 1982. It provides vocational skills training to SPED students of the St. Joseph School District. The school offers ten courses of study which meet the requirements for 167 DOT-approved job titles. The school presently has an enrollment of 450 seniors, almost 10% of whom are SPED students.

The Hillyard School integrates all SPED students into the existing courses of study and does not administer any segregated classes. The courses of study are competency-based, allowing SPED students to achieve according to their potential. When necessary and appropriate, curricula and/or environment are modified to better meet the needs of individual SPED students. SPED students spend one-half of their day at the Hillyard School and return to their home school for academic instruction.

As an alternative to the Hillyard School program, approximately 75 SPED students participate in the Cooperative School-Work Program. Students obtain on-the-job training and part-time or full-time employment through this program. They earn school course credits for the off-campus training or employment positions and they may receive compensation from the employer as

well. The VAC provides on-going supervision at the work site and works with employers to negotiate and resolve any problems.

Evaluation of the cooperative program is formally completed on an annual basis and a system of on-going monitoring has been implemented with participation by school administrators, the VAC, SPED teachers, and the VRC and VR administrators. The criteria used during the evaluation measure the direct impact of the program upon the students:

1) Have they remained employed during their last two years of education? and

2) Were they employed immediately following graduation?

Conclusion

The Hillyard School is a model for providing a comprehensive vocational training experience for SPED students. The coordination of responsibilities and delineation of roles among the VAC, VRE and VRC enhance the successful occupational preparation and eventual securement of employment of students. Similarly, the success of the St. Joseph's Cooperative Work-Study Program is demonstrated by the performance of students. Approximately 95% of all students are considered "26" closures by VR within six months of graduation from school. The rate of recidivism or need for further services is low. Further evidence of the effectiveness of the program concerns the number of employers who continue to accept students for on-the-job training or employment. Given the high rate of unemployment in St. Joseph, competition is high. Yet, the VAC's and VRC's' have not only maintained employers but have increased their numbers. As such, the Cooperative Program has resulted not only in successful vocational training and employment of SPED students, but has impacted upon the attitudes of the community and its support of special needs individuals.

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SECONDARY WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM AND VOCATION ADJUSTMENT COUNSELORS PROGRAM

STATE OF ILLINOIS

SITE VISIT: DECEMBER 12 - 14, 1983

Background

The lead agency in Illinois' interagency efforts relating to occupational preparation of handicapped youth is the Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services which is a cabinet level agency with full departmental status. The Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) has established a system of cooperative agreements with local school vendors to provide for the operation of a Secondary Work Experience Program (SWEP) and, in some instances, for the placement of a Vocational Adjustment Counselor (VAC) in the schools. DORS has 135 signed contractual agreements with vendors encompassing over 600 high schools for the current fiscal year (FY 1984). The vendors include single districts, special education joint agreement districts, low incidence regional programs, private educational agencies, and three state-operated schools for handicapped students. Programs are located in a range of areas from very rural, sparsely-populated settings to populous urban and suburban areas.

Planning

The Secondary Work Experience Program had its roots in the early 60's when a group of VR administrators identified a need for involvement with handicapped youth while they were still in school. The concept of working in partnership with the schools was developed and in 1960 an Extension and Improvement Grant provided funding for the Champaign Public Schools to become involved in cooperative programming. Several more joint programs were established over the next few years and DORS took the critical step of creating a state-level position to coordinate development of cooperative programs. The number of programs continued to expand and by 1971 the demand for specialized personnel was such that the Vocational Adjustment Counselor model was developed. This allowed for expansion of VR services (without raising the DORS personnel headcount) by adding rehabilitation counselor functions to the school payroll.

DORS continues to adapt and modify SWEP and the program has evolved from a purchase of service system to a third-party match program. One constant, however, has been the position of a state-wide coordinator who provides a focal point for the maintenance of interagency efforts and for on-going planning. The state-wide coordinator is assisted in her efforts by the existence of a state-wide SWEP Planning Committee. The Planning Committee consists of six DORS representatives (the coordinator

and a representative from each DORS region) and five representatives of the Illinois Administrators of Special Education (IASE). The IASE representatives range from special education directors to prevocational supervisors and provide an important mechanism for keeping in touch with school district develpments. In addition to its SWEP functions, the Committee plays a significant role in fostering communication between DORS and special education directors at the state level as well as the regional level.

Overview of State Cooperative Efforts

Work experience is the focus of cooperative programming in Illinois. DORS joins together with local vendors to provide students with an array of services culminating in a paid job placement during the secondary program. The services provided include counseling, guidance, diagnostic evaluation, and vocational assessment. Students become eligible for these services as they near employable age or at a time when realistic vocational goals can be set, usually around age 16.

Services are provided within the framework of the Secondary Work Experience Program (SWEP). As noted above, SWEP is administered through Third Party Funding Contractual Agreements between DORS and local vendors. A typical agreement assigns responsibility as follows:

Vendor Responsibilities

- administration of all special education programs
- provision of other services typically considered the responsibility of the schools
- coordination of existing educational and vocational programs with SWEP
- provision of 5 - 15 hours of supervised work experience per week for each SWEP client

DORS Responsibilities

- assignment of rehabilitation personnel to perform rehabilitation duties
- acceptance of student referrals
- determination of eligibility for VR services and provision of services
- provision of case service funds for eligible clients
- development of the IWRP in coordination with the IEP
- provision of the administrative, technical, and consultative services through state and regional staff*

Agreements are tailored to meet the special circumstances of each program and other duties and functions may be assigned as appropriate. DORS has established a detailed system for administration and monitoring of agreements. The system includes instructional manuals which are provided to all vendors to assist them in applying for SWEP and VAC funds and to guide them in implementing the programs.

The critical relationship in Illinois' cooperative arrangement is that of the prevocational coordinator and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (or Vocational Adjustment Counselor). A school must have a prevocational coordinator to participate in SWEP. The duties of the prevocational coordinator are generally job development, job supervision, and interaction with students, parents, and employees on job-related matters. Prevocational coordinators may be assigned full-time to work experience duties or may have some teaching duties.

The prevocational coordinator's primary liaison with DORS is the VR counselor who is assigned to the school system. The VR counselor participates in such activities as staffings, parent and student conferences, and IEP development. (The interaction between the prevocational coordinator and the VR counselor will be discussed further in the site summaries for SEDOL, Ford-Iroquois, and Belleville, below).

In some areas the volume of cases is such that the assignment of a VR counselor would not be adequate to handle the school caseload. DORS has developed the Vocational Adjustment Counselor (VAC) Program to meet this need. A VAC is a rehabilitation counselor who is housed within the school system. The VAC performs the same duties as the VR counselor but serves only a specialized student caseload. DORS and the school vendor jointly estabish professional qualifications for the VAC position and jointly select a candidate to fill the position. THe VAC is an employee of the school vendor; however, the VAC's work and the expenditure of rehabilitation funds is under the supervision of and with approval of a DORS casework supervisor. The VAC is subject to joint termination by DORS and the school vendor.

A school must have a Secondary Work Experience Program in operation to participate in the VAC Program. The VAC Program, like SWEP, is established on a third-party match basis. There are currently sixteen VAC's employed by school vendors across the state of Illinois. As noted earlier, the VAC Program provides a mechanism for expanding rehabilitation services without expanding the DORS staff. Moreover, in FY 83, the VAC contracts cost DORS $224,595 less than it would have cost to maintain an equal number of DORS employees.

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*The staffing pattern includes an Educational Resources Coordinator (ERC) within each region. The ERC function includes linkage, coordination, management, monitoring, etc.

Agency evaluation and analysis reports attest to the cost effectiveness of the SWEP program as well. For example, reports done in 1974 and 1979 show that:

(1) SWEP clients having VR dollars expended by SWEP vendors represent 8-9% of the total DORS population;

(2) VR case service dollars allocated to SWEP vendors represent 6-8% of DORS case service allocations;

(3) SWEP closures comprise approximately 15% of all 26 closures; and,

(4) less than 10% of rehabilitated SWEP cases ever return to DORS for further services.

SEDOL

SEDOL (Special Education District of Lake County) is a special education joint agreement district composed of forty-one member school districts. It encompasses 476 square miles ranging from the Wisconsin border to the Cook County line. SEDOL is extremely varied in terms of its population and its economic base. It includes a navy base, resort areas, rural areas, and some of Chicago's most exclusive suburbs.

SEDOL employs over 600 staff members and provides a range of services including evaluation, direct instruction, and supportive services. The supportive service personnel include prevocational counselors who perform the following roles:

- aiding the special educator in providing a prevocational program
- obtaining vocational training sites in the community
- developing realistic prevocational training programs
- evaluating on-the-job performance
- coordinating post-graduation vocational plans

The Prevocational Department of SEDOL is the focus of joint programming between SEDOL and and DORS.

Planning

Programmatically, SEDOL places an emphasis on providing special needs students with skills needed for the world of work. Being a joint agreement district, SEDOL is also very oriented to non-duplication of services. These two thrusts have resulted in a long-standing relationship with DORS in an effort to enhance vocational services for SEDOL students. SEDOL entered the Secondary Work Experience Program in 1965. It was also the site

of the first Vocational Adjustment Counselor Program in 1971. The Superintendent of SEDOL has served as the co-chair of the SWEP Planning Committee and now serves as its senior advisor. Through these relationships SEDOL has developed a strong work experience program and several vocational evaluation programs which will be described in greater detail below.

Administration/Structure

The interagency effort in Lake County is administered through a SWEP agreement and a VAC agreement between SEDOL and DORS. (Vocational Education works only with LEA's and, thus, is not a party to these agreements or to any other interagency arrangement with SEDOL.) The agreements provide for approximately two years of work experience for SEDOL students and for the placement of two VAC's within SEDOL (one slot was unfilled at the time of the site visit).

The critical relationship in the operation of the interagency effort is that of the prevocational counselor and the VAC. The prevocational counselor attends IEP meetings, assists in development of a prevocational program, obtains training sites, and supervises student performance. The VAC consults on IEP development, prepares the IWRP, and assists in obtaining any extra services or resources a student might need (e.g. transportation, evaluation, salary, etc.). The VAC is also an important source of information on community resources and statewide programs. The VAC's greatest involvement with students is in senior year. At this time the VAC works to facilitate the transition from school to work and works with the prevocational coordinator on placement of SEDOL students. The VAC will continue to work with a SEDOL client, even after graduation, until case closure. VAC's are employees of SEDOL and must be approved by the State Board of Education Specialized Education Services Deparment.

At the DORS regional level, the DORS Regional Education Resources Coordinator monitors the SWEP and VAC programs for budget and program concerns. The information gathered is then reported to the central DORS office. As noted earlier, SEDOL also maintains close direct contact with the state-level SWEP coordinator.

Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

SEDOL employs a variety of realistic worksites and vocational resources for performing vocational evaluations including the Vocational Assessment Lab, the Model Office, and Project Hamburger Day. The Vocational Assessment Lab, which is housed in the Lake County Area Vocational Center, was originally developed with DORS, SEDOL and CETA funds. Its funding for operating is now suppplemented by JTPA and SWEP. Nearly all of the special needs students in SEDOL are evaluated by the Lab. The timing of the evaluation depends on the student's readiness and it can be performed any time from 10th to 12th grade.

Students are referred to the Lab by the SEDOL prevocational counselors and the content of the evaluation will depend on the prevocational counselor's request. Available evaluations include worker trait assessments (JEVS, Valpar), vocational exploration (Singer System), interest assessment, and aptitude and achievement tests. The evaluator writes up a narrative report on the evaluation for the prevocational counselor. When necessary, the evaluator will also discuss evaluation results with IEP team members.

Students may also be evaluated in the Model Office which is set up as an actual job site with eight work stations. Students are assigned to the Model Office for five week sessions and receive assignments in areas such as duplication, collation, binding, and lamination. Students work six hours per week at a rate of $2.00 per hour. Their work attitudes and behaviors are assessed and a written evluation is prepared at the end of the session.

SWEP provides the major support for the Model Office program. SWEP funds are used by the vendor to pay for student transportation and salaries, the supervisor's salary, rent, and machine repair. The Model Office, like the Vocational Assessment Lab, is housed in space rented from the Lake County Area Vocational Center.

Project Hamburger Day is a special evaluation program at the Laremont School, a separate facility for trainable mentally handicapped and other multi-handicapped students. The program involves four weeks of evaluation and training in skills related to fast food preparation. For two full days per week students participate in a simulated restaurant operation, performing such tasks as set up, food preparation, and cash register operation. Students are paid for their work and are evaluated on the basis of their work behavior.

DORS provided start-up funding for Project Hamburger Day and the SWEP agreement also helps provide student salaries. SEDOL provides housing, equipment, teachers, and a vocational coordinator.

Vocational evaluation results are incorporated in both IEP's and IWRP's. The prevocational counselor and the VAC work together to ensure that the documents are coordinated.

Programming

The SWEP program is the major source of vocational programming for SEDOL students at present. As mentioned above, vocational education in Illinois works only with LEA's and has not developed any cooperative arrangements with SEDOL. Special needs students may participate in vocational education but this is arranged through their home schools and is not coordinated with SEDOL in any specific way.

In addition to SWEP funding and programming with DORS, SEDOL offers another specialized work experience program for its students. The VA Project provides a semester of training at the Veteran's Administration Medical Center in North Chicago. Students are assigned to job sites in areas ranging from dental hygiene and office work to plumbing and food preparation. They receive training in specific skills from a VA supervisor and also receive assistance in developing appropriate job behaviors.*

Students work in the VA Program during the morning session and return to school for the afternoon session. Students are evaluated every six weeks by their VA supervisor and receive school credit for their participation in the program. Upon completion of the program they receive a formal letter of recommendation for use with prospective employers.

SEDOL provided a staff position for development of the program and continues to support this position for overall coordination and supervision of the program. The VA Medical Center provides uniforms, lunches, and insurance coverage for participating students. In addition, VA staff members serve as on-the-job supervisors for student workers. Evaluation results show a high level of satisfaction with the program. Moreover, a follow-up study on a group of program participants showed that over 60% were working full time two years after program completion and that only 8% were not working at all.

Ford - Iroquois Special Education Association

The Ford-Iroquois Special Education Association (Ford-Iroquois) is a special education cooperative covering two rural counties in central Illinois. It is composed of seventeen member districts ranging in size from under 50 students to 1500 students. The area is sparsely populated and the local economy is primarily agriculture-based. The Association has its offices in Gibson City and it employs 43 persons.

Administration Structure

Ford-Iroquois is part of DORS Region 2, a 33-county region which was the site of the first rural SWEP program. Region 2 has, at present, 26 SWEP agreements between DORS and school vendors. DORS assigns VR counselors to work with the schools and also provides the services of an Educational Resources Coordinator. The schools assign a prevocational coordinator or a teacher-coordinator to work with DORS in administering the SWEP program. Vocational education is not involved in this effort in a consistent way. DORS tried to establish a system of three-way contacts including vocational education but the effort was not successful. In general, the involvement of vocational education

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*This program was reviewed by another SWEP vendor which now operates a similar program at Hines VA Hospital in Chicago for SWEP and JTPA clients.

in coordinated activities in Region 2 depends on the administrator of each individual school district.

Ford-Iroquois, which is one of the larger SWEP programs in Region 2, employs a full-time prevocational coordinator. The prevocational coordinator is the primary liaison with DORS. The prevocational coordinator obtains background information on potential SWEP participants and is also responsible for an informal vocational evaluation. After obtaining the appropriate releases, the coordinator refers students to DORS. The VR counselor meets with students and parents to explain the program and processes applications to determine eligibility. The prevocational coordinator and the VR counselor work together on job development for students approved for participation in SWEP. The prevocational coordinator has primary responsiblity for job placement and also supervises the students' overall performance. The Educational Resources Coordinator within the DORS regional office serves as a general resource for local staff. He helps interpret statutes and regulations relating to the operation of a work experience program (e.g. DOL regulations, Workers Compensation requirements) and provides other special assistance such as inservice training sessions. He is also reponsible for contract negotiations, program and fiscal monitoring, and coordination of SWEP services with those of all other regions via the state-wide coordinator.

Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

As mentioned earlier, vocational evaluation in Ford-Iroquois is informal at present. The prevocational coordinator reviews psychological and achievement test results and then prepares a set of short-term vocational objectives for the student's IEP. These objectives relate to skills the student will exhibit in the work placement developed. Ford-Iroquois has acknowledged vocational evaluation as an area which requires further development and is currently planning for use of the McCarron-Dial Evaluation System.

The VR counselor receives a copy of the IEP of each SWEP student and is responsible for preparing a coordinated IWRP. Both the prevocational coordinator and the VR counselor attend all annual reviews of students participating in SWEP. The VR counselor often functions as an advocate for students, making suggestions for needed additions to the proposed education plan.

Programming

Ninety percent of the special needs students in Ford-Iroquois participate in some type of vocational education such as home economics, industrial arts, or agriculture. The vocational education classes in the high schools are not competency-based but students have been allowed to complete certain portions of a course. Also, programs have been modified to provide for longer times for tasks, shortened assignments, or oral testing. These

adjustments are generally made by special education teachers who monitor the students.

The academic program for students in special education is also vocationally oriented. Classes include work on purchasing habits, work attitudes and habits, survival skills, and job orientation skills. There is also a special class each year specifically focused on areas such as filling out a W-4 form, preparing income tax returns, etc. The prevocational coordinator serves as a link between the student's work experience placement and the special education teachers, making sure that the academic program addresses areas necessary for successful performance on the job. For example, in the case of a student working at a gas station, the prevocational coordinator developed a math objective to assist the student in making change and processing credit cards. For a student working at a nursing home, classes in nutrition were added to the curriculum.

The work experience program is an important part of vocational programming in Ford-Iroquois and, for some students, may represent their only significant vocational training. Because Gibson City is a small community were everyone knows everyone else and because the school system has a great deal of credibility, the prevocational coordinator has had a lot of success in getting job placements. Even when employers are cutting back on their work force, they are willing to accept students because of the availability of SWEP stipends. The school district has provided in the current year an additional $5,000 to fund work experience for special needs students who are not DORS-eligible. Moreover, some employers fully support student salaries.

The majority of SWEP students in Ford-Iroquois work in factory, food service, or janitorial jobs. About 95% of SWEP participants are able to obtain jobs after graduation (including a small percent who work in a sheltered workshop). Students no longer get lost after graduation because they immediately go into the DORS system. DORS has been monitoring them and is familiar with their cases and they are acquainted with the services DORS has to offer. Region 2 DORS has found the SWEP program to be very effective in terms of the number of rehabilitations it provides and in terms of its cost per capita.

Belleville

The Belleville Area Special Education District is a decentralized cooperative, located in DORS Region 1. The Belleville SWEP is one of the oldest in the region and it has been using some work stations for almost eighteen years.

Administration/Structure

The Belleville SWEP is served by a VR counselor from the local DORS office. In addition, Belleville provides a prevocational coordinator who works with the VR counselor in operating the

program. The prevocational coordinator is responsible for development of the prevocational program and for referring students to DORS. The VR counselor interviews students, takes applications, and determines eligibility for SWEP. The VR counselor also provides assistance in job placement, counseling, and making career choices. The school is, however, seen as the primary provider until graduation. Students are considered to be in prevocational status and, as a result, the VR counselor's involvement is less intense than it is with adult clients.

The Regional Program Administrator for Region 1 serves as a general resource to the work experience program. He negotiates contracts, monitors billing and reporting and provides specialized information to the VR counselor and the prevocational coordinator. The Regional Program Administrator is also currently fulfilling the duties of Educational Resources Coordinator, as this position is vacant at present.

Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

The school is responsible for assessment of potential SWEP participants and DORS relies on school diagnostic and referral information in determining eligibility for the program. The referral packet will contain the student's IEP and the VR counselor works carefully to prepare a coordinated IWRP. The IWRP is then shared with the school.

A student's IEP will specify that work training will be received and will also outline instructional goals which relate to the work placement. For example, a sample IEP provided contained a vocational English goal centered on providing reading, writing and communication skills necessary for employment.

Programming

The prevocational coordinator makes contact with students and parents in freshman year. He participates in annual reviews and begins talking about work, jobs, and the SWEP program. Special Education students receive some vocational material in English class such as reading about jobs and writing business letters. In addition, most boys participate in workshop classes and most girls participate in home economics.

In sophomore year the prevocational coordinator begins to counsel students. They fill out their applications for SWEP and begin to work on resumes. In math class they work on areas such as telling time and filling out time sheets. Because there is not much vocational education available for handicapped students in the area, SWEP may represent their only opportunity to have a real training experience.

Students in the Belleville SWEP work in a variety of settings including a sign shop, an animal clinic, an alterations shop, a flower shop, and a golf club. The prevocational coordinator has found small businesses to be the best setting for work experience

and feels that they provide more individual attention for the students. The prevocational coordinator meets individually with all supervisors and works with them in completing student evaluations.

The prevocational coordinator teaches one class and uses classroom time to provide information related to performing on the job. The prevocational coordinator also works with students on job seeking and interviewing skills in class.

Those involved with the SWEP program credit it with making schools in the area more aware that vocational goals must be planned for and dealt with. The schools are becoming more oriented to the issue of transition from school to work. Moreover, students are less likely to get lost upon graduation and they are coming to DORS with a history of success rather than the history of failure that was common before. As a result, DORS is better able to place them in appropriate jobs upon graduation.

The DORS counselor in this particular area of the state has found that, despite the successes of many of the SWEP participants, DORS is still not able to place a number of students. DORS staff and school staff have also identified a need to address the issues of SSI as a disincentive to severely handicapped student participation in the work force and the difficulties of placing trainable mentally handicapped students in competitive employment.

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VORSE II PROJECT

UTICA, NEW YORK

SITE VISIT: JANUARY 9 - 11, 1984

Background Information

A Youth Services Unit in the Utica Area Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) serves as the focal point for local cooperative efforts relating to occupational preparation of handicapped youth. The Youth Services Unit was developed under VORSE II, a special project aimed at integrating special education, vocational education, and vocational rehabilitation services for special education students. VORSE II has provided for the outstationing of six VR counselors to serve students in eight central New York counties. VORSE counselors, along with a Unit Supervisor and a VR counselor stationed at the New York State School for the Deaf in Rome comprise the Youth Services Unit.

The counties currently served by the VORSE II project include Oneida, Herkimer, Lewis, Eastern Madison, Fulton, Montgomery, and Hamilton.* These counties represent a broad range of characteristics and problems. They include cities with the usual array of urban problems as well as areas which are completely rural. The economic base ranges from the leather industry in Fulton-Montgomery to the service trades in Utica to dairy farming in Lewis and Oneida. Unemployment is high throughout the region and public transportation is poor to non-existent in many sections.

Despite the diversity of the geographic areas it encompasses and the variety of problems it has had to contend with, the VORSE II project has had unusual success. It has served 1327 clients in three years of operation. Although 76% of its clients are mentally retarded, more than half of them have been placed in competitive employment. In addition, by use of a job coach model, VORSE II has been able to obtain summer work experience in the community for severely handicapped youth.

Planning

VORSE II was the result of grass roots efforts on the part of OVR and local school personnel. The Utica Area Office of OVR had assigned a VR counselor to work with the school population. She, in turn, established contacts with special education in order to provide students who were about to graduate with an orderly transition to adult services. Despite these efforts, many special education students were dropping out of high school

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*Jefferson County was also part of the original project.

before graduation and coming to OVR through such routes as welfare, probation, or parole. These students generally had a long history of failure and were extremely difficult to work with. To try to plug up the drop-out hole, the VR counselor began to work with younger high school students and soon had a caseload of over 300 students. It was apparent that someone had to address the problem in a more systematic way and the VR counselor met with several directors of vocational education and special education to develop a concept for a cooperative project. A proposal entitled VORSE (Vocational Occupational Rehabilitation in Special Education) resulted but the group was unable to obtain funding for the project.

When a new set of federal funding initiatives was announced, the VORSE concept was resurrected. The Manager of the OVR Area Office provided the VR counselor with time off and caseload coverage so that she could write a new proposal. Building upon the objectives developed locally for VORSE, she developed VORSE II - A Model for an Area-Wide Program for Cooperative Planning and Service Delivery for Students With Special Needs. The Rehabilitation Services Administration awarded a three-year grant, commencing November 1, 1980, to the project. The project also received state VEA funding and funding from the Office for the Education of Children with Handicapping Conditions (OECHC).

The VORSE II grant proposal provides the guidelines for the operation of the project and the participants have not found it necessary to enter into additional formal cooperative agreements. The proposal states the project objectives and contains the evaluation instruments which have been used in determining if the objectives have been met. It outlines the functions and duties of the project staff and provides a structure for outstationing of VR counselors. The proposal describes the project's target population (multi-handicapped, TMR, EMR, emotionally disturbed, physically limited, other severely physically handicapped, profoundly retarded, and learning disabled) and highlights issues related to vocational programming for severely and multi-handicapped students. Finally, it sets out a detailed timetable for project implementation.

The project staff uses the mechanism of written meeting summaries to modify or expand upon the operations outlined in the proposal. When a change is contemplated or an issue arises, all of the parties involved meet to discuss and agree upon a plan of action. A summary of the discussion and the consensus reached is distributed to all of the meeting participants. The project staff feels that this approach has provided greater flexibility and efficiency than would the use of formal interagency agreements. They note that each station has evolved somewhat differently in response to unique circumstances and that it would be difficult to develop a single agreement which would be appropriate in all cases.

Administration/Structure

A. Youth Services Unit

The existence of a special unit devoted to youth issues is a major factor in the success of the VORSE II project. The VR counselor who originally developed the VORSE II proposal now serves as Unit Supervisor of the Youth Services Unit. Because of her extensive experience in working with the schools, she is well acquainted with the issues faced by the Unit counselors. The Unit counselors are placed in six stations* across the region served by the project and, as mentioned above, at the New York State School for the Deaf in Rome. Because OVR and school district boundaries are not necessarily the same, the project does not cover the same territory as the Utica Area Office. The project operates according to school district and BOCES** lines, an approach which is possible because of the Utica Area Office's flexible attitude on boundaries.

The VR counselors operate in a variety of settings depending on the needs of the area they are serving. For example, one counselor has an office in the Amsterdam School District as well as having space at a local BOCES and two local Department of Labor (state employment security agency) offices. Several other counselors have their primary field offices in local BOCES while the counselor for the Utica City School District operates out of the Utica OVR office. The primary field office locations provide rent-free space and basic telephone service. OVR provides furniture, supplies, and secretarial support. Original case files are located in the Utica Area Office and duplicates are maintained at the stations. In general, the VR counselors spend four days per week in the field and return to the Utica Area Office on the fifth day. This arrangement allows for regular exchange of information, unit meetings, training, and supervision.

The VR counselors' duties include vocational and personal adjustment counseling, service coordination, consultation to schools on vocational planning, coordination of the summer employment program, and job placement. Each counselor utilizes somewhat different methods of operation and lines of communication. The major school contact person may be a social worker, a guidance counselor, or a work-study coordinator. In each instance, however, the VR counselor is viewed as an important part of the special education team. Most VORSE participants attribute the effectiveness of the OVR counselors'

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*One slot was unfilled at the time of the site visit.

**Board of Cooperative Educational Services, the Administrative mechanism by which school districts join together to provide programs which cannot be operated efficiently on an individual basis. BOCES provide both special education and vocational education services.

role to the placement of the counselors in the school system. These counselors are described as being more visible and having a better knowledge of students than counselors who are simply assigned a school caseload. As a result, school personnel are more inclined to seek their participation. In fact, VORSE evaluation statistics show that interaction between VR counselors and special education teachers has increased more than tenfold since the inception of the project.

As noted above, the role of the VR counselor varies from station to station. The following are some examples of how a counselor may operate in his/her particular setting.

- o One counselor works gradually to get to know younger students. He introduces them to the summer employment program and later gets them into work-study during the school year. He also does post-high school job placement. This counselor has found that many of his referrals are students no one else can work with and that many are on the verge of dropping out.

- o One counselor spends a significant amount of time working with teachers of 14-15 year old students. His focus is adding ideas to the classroom so that work behaviors are taught. This counselor also does general counseling, job development, and placement for junior and seniors.

- o One counselor makes many classroom visits. He observes students, discusses problems, and talks about jobs. This counselor also gets involved in curriculum development.

- o One counselor previously implemented a curriculum of job seeking skills but now focusses more on working with individual students. This counselor addresses advocacy issues (e.g. dealing with Social Security), discusses plans for the future with students, and assists in individual program development.

The OVR counselors fill a variety of additional roles in the various sites. In some instances they act as a liaison between special education and vocational education, assisting in the placement of students in vocational programs. When appropriate, the counselors assist in IEP development. The counselors also sit on a number of school advisory committees (e.g. Vocational Education Advisory Committees, BOCES Special Education Advisory Committees). In addition, they participate in Private Industry Councils (PIC's), the local Industry, Labor and Education Council, the Herkimer County Council of Social Concerns, the Oneida County Coalition of Youth Services, and other local organizations.

B. Summer Program

Another unique feature of the Utica area effort is the summer work program which has operated during the summers of 1981, 1982, and 1983. VORSE dveloped a linkage with the CETA Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) in order to provide community-based

work experience for disabled youth. SYEP provided funding for salaries for students working in public and private non-profit agencies. OVR provided funding for instruction and supervision of the students. OVR also agreed to pre-screen applicants, develop job sites, and match applicants to sites. The program has made over 1200 placements in areas including child care, hospital work, maintenance, food service, and secretarial work.

The summer program is structured to meet the individual needs of participating students. Some require only an initial labor market orientation, a small amount of on-site instruction, and routine monitoring in order to perform successfully. Others require a greater degree of assistance. The amount of on-site instruction a student receives depends on the severity of his/her disability, the complexity of the tasks involved, and the student's level of vocational development. For the most severely disabled students (approximately 20% of all participants a "job coach" model has been adopted. OJT instructors work intensively with students, training them in both specific work tasks and independent living skills. Instructors remain with students during breaks and at lunch time to work on appropriate behavior and similar issues (e.g. use of money, use of vending machines, interaction with coworkers). Some instructors even accompany students to work and train them on the use of public transportation. The instructors are paid with individual case service dollars. The use of this model has allowed a significant number of severely handicapped students to become employed in the community for the first time.

VORSE has built a significant base of support for its overall efforts by hiring school personnel to work in the summer program. Teachers, social workers, guidance counselors, and even principals serve as OJT instructors and coordinators. For many of them, the program provides an introduction to OVR services and a new awareness of the vocational potential of handicapped students. The VORSE staff is responsible for overall supervision of the program and for the development of policies and procedures. They have prepared written guidelines dealing with such matters as application procedures, job site development, discipline policy, and labor market orientation. The VORSE staff, in conjunction with the coordinators, also conducts a pre-service training course for OJT instructors. The OJT instructors are then introduced to the individual employers. They become familiar with the job site, the work routine, and the specific tasks required. OJT instructors also perform a job and task analysis to assist in the training of their students. The OJT instructors receive continuing assistance and supervision from the coordinators who, in turn, report to the VORSE staff.

For a discussion of the summer program as a vocational evaluation tool, see Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development, below.

Training

The VORSE staff has been actively involved in training activities from the inception of the project. Members of the Youth Services Unit initially participated in a one-week training program conducted by the Unit Supervisor and the Oneida County BOCES Special Education Training and Resource Center.* The training provided an introduction to the area of special education, to relevant statutes and regulations, and to methods for working with the schools. The VORSE staff members later built upon this training to develop an in-service training program for VR counselors. This training program has been presented to VR counselors in area offices across the state of New York.

The VR counselor training program provides realistic advice for counselors on going into schools. It covers such areas as establishing linkages, maintaining communications, and avoiding problems. The training sessions are accompanied by a set of practical materials including:

- Setting Up a Good Working Relationship Within the School (or BOCES) System - a set of guidelines for the pre-implementation phase, and

- Do's and Dont's for OVR Counselors Working in School Systems - a set of recommendations based on the experience of the VORSE staff in working in the schools.

The VORSE staff has also made a point of including school administrators in the training sessions. They provide first-hand information on how schools operate and how VR counselors can best fit into the system.

Assessment and IEP/IWRP Development

The Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) is one of the primary tools for vocational evaluation of special education students in the Utica area. The Schools provide initial data and prevocational testing for students who are entering the program. Students are then placed in jobs where they appear to have interests and abilities. The summer program tests their performance in these jobs and provides a written report which is shared with the schools. Some students participate in the program for several years and, thus, have an opportunity to explore a variety of job areas. The summer program is the major vehicle for hands-on assessment in the Utica area at this time. Several school people have stated that its usefulness as an

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*One of 45 training centers set up across the state of New York with 94-142 discretionary funds. Their purpose is to provide training in special education for persons other than special education personnel, e.g., occupational or regular education teachers, parents, and Board of Education members.

evaluation tool would be even greater if the reporting format related more directly to the school program.

Aside from the summer program, there is not a great deal of formal vocational evaluation of special education students. In preparing IEP's containing vocational goals, team members rely primarily on teacher evaluations, psychologicals, and similar assessments. OVR will pay for a diagnostic vocational evaluation when appropriate but this option is not generally used. The OVR evaluations usually consist of sending students to a rehabilitation facility such as an ARC workshop. The schools have felt that this procedure is too lengthy and removes students from classes for toc long. As a result there is general interest in developing in-house vocational evaluation capability. For example, the School for the Deaf is currently working with the Singer Corporation on acquiring vocational evaluation equipment adapted for use by deaf persons. This equipment could be used for student asssessments and for assessment of other OVR clients, as well.

Development of IEP's in the state of New York is the responsibility of local Committees on the Handicapped (COH). OVR counselors participate in IEP development when appropriate, particularly when admission to a vocational education program is contemplated. The OVR counselor also develops IWRP's for all students accepted as OVR clients. Because the OVR counselors are based in the schools, they have a thorough knowledge of the academic program and they are also acquainted with the individual students. Thus, they are able to insure that the IWRP reflects the academic program and the student's vocational needs. The IWRP is stamped with a statement that it will be coordinated with the student's IEP and a copy is routinely sent to the school. The IWRP is included with the IEP and becomes a part of the IEP upon COH approval. The IEP, in turn, becomes part of the student's OVR file. This process provides a mechanism for linking IEP's with post-high school goals.

In the area of development of vocational objectives the School for the Deaf in Rome is particularly noteworthy. The School for the Deaf has developed an alternative high school program for severely handicapped hearing impaired students, including some residents of local institutions for mentally retarded/mentally ill persons. The staff of the alternative high school has prepared a curriculum guide entitled Steps toward Educating People for Survival (STEPS).* The STEPS guide contains over 125 objectives relating to independent living and work related skills. The work related skills cover such areas as dressing, social behaviors, materials/tools, safety, pay, and OVR functions. The categories are related to a five level work

*Preparation of STEPS was partially funded by the Division of Personnel Preparation, now part of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education.

experience program in which students progress from teacher - supervised in-class jobs to competitive off-campus employment. The categories are introduced gradually and objectives are added as the individual student acquires more complex skills. For example, a student might move from a pre-level objective of telling time to a level IV objective of computing overtime. In the area of hiring, a student might move from a level I objective of understanding a job description to a level III objective of requesting references, writing a resume, and reading want ads. The STEPS curriculum is considered a working curriculum and is constantly revised and updated with input from the OVR counselor stationed at the school. The program will graduate ten students this year and all are considered ready to hold a job. OVR will be used as a resource in their placement.

Programming

Since the inception of the project the VORSE staff has noted a 39% increase in the number of special education students participating in occupational education programs at the six VORSE stations.* The programs are located at schools or at BOCES and their content varies from station to station. In some instances special courses have been developed with the assistance of OVR. In other instances schools have hired special personnel to facilitate vocational programming for handicapped students. Some examples of promising developments in the area of vocational programming are, as follows:

o One of the BOCES visited now offers a special course for gas station service attendants which was developed with the assistance of OVR. In another BOCES the OVR counselor is working with school personnel to develop a three-year work-study program for emotionally disturbed students. The OVR counselor at the School for the Deaf helped to develop a weekly "Job Survival Skills" seminar.

o In one of the BOCES visited the Director of Special Education created a special guidance position to coordinate with vocational education and OVR. This staff person contacts students and parents to provide information on OVR and then notifies the on-site OVR counselor about potential clients. He also works with vocational education personnel on acceptance of special education students in vocational courses. He provides information on students, obtains assistance for teachers, and obtains academic supports for students. He has had good success in getting vocational teachers interested in and attached to special needs students.

o The BOCES which created the special guidance position also developed a special exploratory program for special needs students. Members of the special education staff and the

*From 415 students in Fall 1980 to 578 students in Fall 1983.

vocational education staff worked together with VEA funds to establish this program. The program includes a shop component covering such areas as construction trades, building maintenance, and agriculture and a home economics component covering such areas as food service, office and retail, and child care. Students rotate through each area for five weeks and are reviewed and evaluated at the end of the year. They can stay in the program as long as necessary before making the transition into regular vocational education.

o A special education teacher in one of the BOCES visited started an information sheet for vocational education teachers. It tells them who to contact regarding their special needs students. The special education teacher personally delivers the information sheet in order to make contact with the vocational education teachers.

o OVR works with the schools in operating a work-study program for special needs students. Approximately 40-50 students are involved in the program at present. Students are placed in paid positions in the community in areas such as food service and maintenance. OVR reimburses employers at a rate ranging from 100% to 50% during the work-study period. OVR prefers work-study placements where there is a potential for long-term employment and, in fact, a number of placements have resulted in full-time jobs after graduation. For students, the work-study program is a welcome opportunity to obtain work experience, earn some money, and meet other people.

Conclusion

The interagency effort in the Utica area is characterized by a great deal of flexibility and a great willingness to try new approaches. The placement of counselors in the schools and the use of school staff in the summer program has created a strong constituency for OVR in the school community and has resulted in a program with successes in several significant areas. Continuity of service has increased, duplication of effort has decreased, and competitive rehabilitations predominate. Disabled students have ben placed in the community in greater numbers, enhancing community perceptions of their work potential, and most importantly, enhancing their own perceptions of their abilities.

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Significant Characteristics of Field Study Programs

PROGRAM TITLE	LOCATION	TYPE OF INITIATIVE	SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERISTICS
Cooperative School Program	Torrance, CA	Local	• VR, Vocational Education, and Special Education are equal partners in the program • Continuum of service begins in 9th grade and includes vocational assessment, pre-vocational and vocational classes, on-campus work experience, and community work experience • Work experience stipends are paid by VR and take the form of incentive wage • Placement of VR counselors in schools • School system employs job developer to work full time with outside employers

Significant Characteristics of Field Study Programs (continued)

PROGRAM TITLE	LOCATION	TYPE OF INITIATIVE	SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERISTICS
Cooperative School/ Rehabilitation Work-Study Program	State of Oklahoma	State-wide	• High level of commitment by state administrators • Broad state interagency agreement • Agreements between state VR office and local school districts • Emphasis on work experience with salaries paid by private employers • Efforts to establish continuum of service with vocational programming serving as preparation for work experience • Placement of VR counselors in schools • Two day inservice summer workshop for cooperative program personnel

Significant Characteristics of Field Study Programs (Continued)

PROGRAM TITLE	LOCATION	TYPE OF INITIATIVE	SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERISTICS
Interagency Service Delivery System for Vocational Education and Related Services for the Handicapped	State of Michigan	State-wide	• Extensive state statutory scheme providing for special education services through age 26 when appropriate, vocational education as a required service, and strict education supervision of work experience placements • High level of commitment by state administrators • Comprehensive state interagency agreement developed as working manual • Local interagency agreements based on state agreement • Specific assignment of responsibility for interagency programming within VR, Special Education, and Vocational Education • Vocational schools are totally competency based • Emphasis on integration of special needs students into vocational schools • Use of paraprofessionals as aides in vocational classes • Massive state-wide in-service training and follow-up efforts

Significant Characteristics of Field Study Programs (Continued)

PROGRAM TITLE	LOCATION	TYPE OF INITIATIVE	SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERISTICS
North Dakota Interagency Cooperative Agreement/ Fargo, Region 5	State of North Dakota/Fargo, North Dakota	State-wide/ local	• High level of commitment by state administrators • Broad state interagency agreement • Local agreement developed as working manual • Broad state-wide in-service training and follow-up efforts • State-level coordinating committee • Local committees patterned on state committee • Coordination integrated into regular activities of VR, Special Education, and Vocational Education without any special funding mechanism • School-funded work experience program

Significant Characteristics of Field Study Programs (Continued)

PROGRAM TITLE	LOCATION	TYPE OF INITIATIVE	SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERISTICS
Project Work Ability	State of California	State-wide	• State-wide program in which Vocational Education serves as lead agency • Active involvement by Employment Development Department (state employment security agency) • Emphasis on work experience with stipends paid by a variety of sources • Reliance on local initiative with programs evolving according to local needs • Significant success in accessing JTPA funds • Sophisticated data collection and reporting system

Significant Characteristics of Field Study Programs (Continued)

PROGRAM TITLE	LOCATION	TYPE OF INITIATIVE	SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERISTICS
Richland County School District 2, VR Public School Cooperative Program	Richland County, South Carolina	Local	• State VR office contracts with local school districts • Placement of VR counselors in schools • Linkage between VR and Vocational Education • Development of Evaluation and Adjustment Service Unit • Compilation of statistics showing high percent of competitive rehabs and low cost per rehab
St. Joseph School District	St. Joseph, Missouri	Local	• State VR office contracts with local school districts • Placement of VR counselors within schools • Program includes work experience component with salaries paid by private employers • Missouri LINC provides state-wide technical assistance on vocational education for special needs students • State-wide summer in-service training program for special education, vocational education and vocational rehabilitation personnel

Significant Characteristics of Field Study Programs (Continued)

PROGRAM TITLE	LOCATION	TYPE OF INITIATIVE	SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERISTICS
Secondary Work Experience Program and Vocational Adjustment Counselors Programs	State of Illinois	State-wide	• State VR office contracts with local school districts • Emphasis on work experience with stipends provided by VR • VR counselors work closely with local schools • VR provides funding for Vocational Adjustment Counselors (VAC's) within schools • VR involvement has fostered vocational orientation which was previously lacking in schools

Significant Characteristics of Field Study Programs (Concluded)

PROGRAM TITLE	LOCATION	TYPE OF INITIATIVE	SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERISTICS
VORSE II Project	Utica, New York	Local	• Extensive Summer Work Experience Program • VR hires school personnel to work as job coaches for severely handicapped students during summer • Summer work report is used as hands-on vocational assessment • Placement of VR counselors in schools • VR involvement in curriculum development • Documented increase in competitive rehabs and decrease in cost per rehab • Serves a population which is 80% developmentally disabled

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